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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the three 1989 issues of "The Teacher Trainer," a journal for language teacher educators. The following articles appear in these issues: "From a Garage to a Teachers' Centre"; "Taking Risks--Being Unprepared?"; "Teacher Echoing and More"; "Teaching Lemon as a Foreign Language: Drama in Foreign Language Teaching"; "On Transforming Language Teachers English Language Teachers"; "A Last Lesson--Ending a Course Gracefully"; "The Backwards Lecture"; "Observation Tasks for Course?"; "Gone to Teachers Every One--A Critique of Accepted Pre-Service Teacher Training"; "The Flexible List"; "MAs and Postgraduate Qualifications"; "Interview with Roger Bowers"; "Teacher Training for Steiner Schools"; "Self Access Teacher Training"; "Taking the Stress Out of Discussing Lessons"; "Advisory Perspectives"; "A Teacher Training Course in China"; Training Inside and Outside Your School"; "Mapping the Day"; "The Ever Learn?--Some Relevant Teacher Training Procedures"; "Two Short Training Ideas"; "What Sort of Modern Language Teachers Do We Need?"; "Teachers' Groups in Spain"; "Poster Presentations on Teacher Training Courses"; "What Are Your Theories?"; "The Case for Delayed Feedback After Teaching Practice and Observation"; "A Travelling Trainer in Israel"; and "T + TT + TTT = A Crowded Classroom." (MSE)

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume three Number one

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

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EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to 1989 and a new volume. We've had a few changes since last time. Phillip Burrows, our cartoonist, has been up to his neck in work and problems so, sadly, we will have fewer of his lovely cartoons in future. Carolyn Willow has joined us as our new cartoonist and some subscribers have threatened to start drawing as well! Join in, if you feel like it.

After an informal poll of readers, we've decided to change the description of 'The Teacher Trainer' from "newsletter". Most people felt we should call ourselves a "journal" now. But for the two readers who wrote in worried about the potentially magnetic effect this renaming might have on pedants wishing to drown us in pompous boring articles, we have opted for "practical journal".

'The Teacher Trainer' regularly runs series on different themes. Not all series appear in each issue. Those wishing to keep track of what has come up in issues to date should write in for a copy of "The story so far ....".

In this issue we have articles for the inexperienced teacher trainer (by Jordi Roca), on setting up a teachers' centre (see the crowd from Reggio di Calabria) and on the nitty gritty of getting quiet participants to speak up (see Virginia Locastro's article).

Andrew Thomas gives us his thoughts on some courses for teachers and trainers in Sri Lanka. Another Andrew, Andy Baxter adds Brecht to EFL and comes up with a lemon!

A new series 'Trainer Talks' takes advantage of the chance given by international conferences and events to buttonhole globe-trotting trainers in bars and corridors and get them talking about what interests them most at the moment. This new series starts with Ephraim Weinbraub and Jane Revell both caught in mid-gallop at an IATEFL conference.

Anthony Hall and Ruth Wajnryb both tackle the opposite end of popular issues. Anthony Hall deals with being unprepared for lessons and Ruth Wajryb with finishing courses rather than starting them.

Voluntary Service Overseas sends thousands of teachers abroad each year. An article in this issue shows how the organisation makes sure its volunteers are useful when they get there!

'The Teacher Trainer''s strong interest in the how of training as well as the what, continues in this issue with a session report by Sue Inkster and Bob Moxon on a training event held in Paris.

The Process Options series is back as usual with a fresh idea too.

Finally there is information about two new organisations for teacher trainers: "EFLTED" and the new IATEFL "TT SIG". We should run an anagram competition with all those initials!

I hope you enjoy this issue. Thanks for joining us in Volume Three.

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staff-room, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

COMMENT

Dear Sir/Madam,

I disagree with Rod Bolitho's article "Teaching, teacher training and applied linguistics". (Teacher Trainer, 2,3) on a number of points. I illustrate the first three of these with reference to the Edinburgh MSc on which I teach, but I'm sure my comments also apply to many other Masters Courses:

(i) Lecturers have not necessarily left the classroom. I still do between 4 and 15 hours a week of direct FL teaching (English and German), 40 plus weeks a year. Our course includes classroom observation, video and live.

(ii) Our course does not discourage teachers from tackling their own professional problems: after some initial theoretical input, they have to do this all the time!

(iii) We are not in a privileged position vis-a-vis our students, but often worse off in terms of pay and conditions than they were and will be before and after the course.

(iv) It is naive to suggest that teaching should be left entirely to teachers, who 'need only to have the options laid out for them'. Under such conditions teachers teach in a way which is comfortable for them, but not necessarily best for their students.

(v) Of course sending a few teachers on masters courses is elitist, but such elitism is inherent in our political systems. Until the revolution comes there will be people in positions of power and privilege in teaching institutions, and it makes sense for such people to go back to being a student from time to time, even if all they learn is humility.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Parkinson
Lecturer, I.A.L.S.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH. Institute for Applied Language Studies.

FROM A GARAGE TO A TEACHER'S CENTRE: Reggio Calabria, Italy.

Some years ago there was a cold and empty room on the ground floor of a block of flats - the building was used as a school and in 1982 one of its rooms was put at the disposal of the I.R.R.S.A.E. for the British Council Distance Training Foundation Module (D.T.F.M.). The I.R.R.S.A.E. Istituto Regionale per la Ricerca, Sperimentezione, Aggiornamente Educetivi is a regional body which was set up many years ago to do some educational research and to promote experiments with new methods of teaching. During the D.T.F.M. course teachers began to appreciate the value of working together and sharing knowledge and experiences. The head-master of the school was so impressed by the involvement of the teachers following a long course based on a voluntary in-service training scene, that he offered them the use of the "ex garage" as a language room. The time was ripe and all that was needed was the positive encouragement and advice of the British Council to create a teachers' centre in our town.

The 'garage' became a language room in the morning and a teachers' centre in the afternoon. As a result a constitution was drawn up for the centre. We needed to pool energies, establish roles, combine our efforts to make the running of the centre efficient.

We had clear ideas about what our centre should be: we wanted a place where teachers from all kinds of schools could come for a "give-and-take" of software, materials, books, journals, problems, solutions, successful experiences and failures.

Our "ex garage" was not as nice and cosy as British Council teachers' centres, but it was something to begin with and was in a school, our "natural" environment. We filled our shelves with books and journals, put a lot of work into our centre as we wanted it to be "ours", "of the teachers", (run) "by the teachers". We wanted it to be an "in-service education centre",(a place) where we could regularly meet, study problems arising from our experiences and try to find a solution

TRAINER ODOUR

Jonathan Marks of ILC/IH Hastings, England, has brought it to our attention that we can now buy "Trainer Tamers" in our local shops! Made of indestructible fabric, these (trainer-insoles) tame ferocious trainer odour. The blurb on the back of the packet states that "Trainer odour is one of the most ferocious odours known and ... is threatening to get out of control". Trainer Tamers, made up of billions of particles of activated charcoal, promise to bring trainer odour to an end and are guaranteed for the life of the trainer. Yours from Combe OdorEaters. (Trainer Tamers fit all sizes of Trainer).

by ourselves, supported and assisted by outside experts. We have been trying to build up a "self help place", a sort of "resource" room where we hope to offer not only material aids but also guidance for teachers seeking help. At our place we like sharing information and experiences. Some of us who attend training courses in Italy or abroad (summer courses for example) bring back to the centre new ideas which can be passed on to the other members.

We meet every Wednesday for ordinary meetings and organise Seminars on themes chosen at the beginning of the school year.

We are in contact with British Council experts and also with experts coming from Britain for seminars we organise by ourselves or together with other Teachers' Centres which have grown up in the south of Italy.

We also have contacts with publishing houses which often send authors to present their new textbooks. This also helps us to build up a permanent show of the latest books and materials, (the British Council in Naples is helping us through the "book box scheme" by means of which every year every centre in the south receives boxes of books with which they organise an exhibition of the latest books sent by publishing houses.)

Our biggest problems are money and time as we are a self-financed group and work on a voluntary basis. Colleagues tend to fade away when more participation on the "organisational level" is needed. They are quite happy to attend seminars with outside experts but are not easily involved in working at the centre. They come and go probably a bit discouraged by the present situation of the Italian System, which especially at "scuola secondaria" level is still waiting for an institutional change (the "Riforma" of "Scuola Secondaria").

For next year we hope to get funds from official bodies and to involve more colleagues (through questionnaires to be sent to schools in order to ascertain the reaction of teachers to the previous year's centre programme and try to understand their needs in the following year).

We don't know if our story is useful for "The Teacher Trainer" - papers about T.C.s in Italy have been published by M.E.P. in "Teacher Education" (English at School - British Council Sorrento Conference 1986) where information is given in a more systematic way.

We hope to keep in touch through the "Teacher Trainer" as well.

Our best wishes.

M. Carretta Luisa Marie Aoto Rose

and all the members of the Teachers' Centre.
Reggio Calabria.

Subscriptions Information

Please support "The Teacher Trainer"! It's the only publication existing solely as a forum for the modern language teacher trainer.

The cost for three issues a year is:-

Individuals	£13.00	including postage
Organisations	£16.00	including postage

The journal is for a specialist audience and so circulation figures will be considerably lower than for more general teaching magazines. The costs of producing a journal do not, however, sink appreciably just because the circulation is small. We have, therefore, settled on the figure above .....

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.....

TAKING RISKS - BEING UNPREPARED
by Anthony Hall

Of the 12 meanings in the COBUILD dictionary for 'risk' only one or two indicate that there might be a danger to life and limb. So we are on pretty safe ground when we encourage learners to 'take risks'. But the dictionary does not succeed in offering a positive outcome as the result of taking a risk. "Something unpleasant or undesirable" is the usual definition, while "it was a risk and it paid off" features only once. Does this mean that too few teacher trainer texts are in the Cobuild Corpus, or is risk taking something that we like to preach, but rarely practise? For example, have you tried to incorporate any of the new Process Options (in past issues of "The Teacher Trainer) into your recent work? Or even the Psycho-Drama model? (Volume Two Number One).

Here's some space for you to write down how successful your process option was.

_____

_____

I would suggest that no preparation or failed preparation are two ways of putting yourself at risk, there can also be a positive outcome to such an apparently threatening situation.

How do school teaching and short-course teacher -training compare in terms of risks and safety-nets? In the table below I have tried to establish parallels. At one end of the scale we have non-risk elements in schools such as textbooks, and at the other, on short courses, the unknown factor of participants' personalities. Do you agree with these simplistic correspondences? Or with the order in the scale?

SCHOOL TEACHING	SHORT-COURSE TEACHER TRAINING	AGREE? Then Tick here
1. Textbook	Course programme	
2. Teacher authority	Trainer authority	
3. Pupil equality	Teacher equality	
4. Discipline	Respect/success	
5. Home background	Participant personality	

Have you ticked or made changes?

I wasn't joking when I said no preparation earlier. It's only when you're not prepared and know you've got over an hour to fill that you really try to build on the group's responses to whatever you decided upon as your opening gambit. And because you're having to think at the same speed as the participants they will probably get more opportunity to talk, since they won't be trying to analyse the situation at the same time. They may even provoke you into unprepared statements which can be far more instructive, because they are formulations dependent on that one moment in time, formulations which need reappraisal or which are open to challenge, formulations which are hopefully not regurgitated buzz-words.

Have you ever had an experience of being provoked into unprepared statements?

_____

_____

So far I've been rather heavy on the philosophy and not concrete enough. A basic example is any activity involving matching, e.g. people to the cars they drive, or functions to exponents. This activity can easily suffer from over-preparation, from the belief that the exercise is 100% clear. Is there really only one set of correct matches? Do you leave teaching space for students to question the arbitrariness of the correct answers?

The opposite of over-preparation is under-preparation. On courses we are often members of teams and hence rely on each other's preparation. This can lead to big divergences during group work, since what seemed like explicit instructions the evening before, turn out to be interpretable. This happened to me with the skeleton story "King Caliban".* I didn't realise it was a skeleton and read it to the group as a poem, instead of expanding the skeleton into my own story. The follow-up activity consisted of a list of 50 questions on the text, from which each individual selected the ones s/he thought were worth answering, and posed them to a partner. This activity in my group lasted for over 80 minutes, whereas in parallel groups it took only twenty. When my "mistake" became known however, colleagues were unhappy that I had not completed the other activities allocated to that session. Earnest efforts were made to make sure I did not make the same mistake again!

Sometimes, doing an exercise 'wrong' in some way is not due to ignorance, as above, but due to an inability to decentre, to see the world from somebody else's point of view. What do you do if you are using published materials and you cannot see the rationale behind an exercise, or any usefulness in it?

_____

_____

* "King Caliban", see P.16 "Once Upon a Time", Morgan, J. & M. Rinvolucri. CUP (1983).

Do you still go ahead with it? Your students may see it differently. Coupled with an instruction like "I couldn't do this, see how you get on", you are in a position afterwards to discuss the exercise seriously.

The above is an example of classroom language that I think is linked to risk-taking. Here are some other examples:

"I don't know what to do now/How shall we go on from here?"

"I've got a bit of a problem. I don't know how to organise your access to these materials."

"I've never tried/done this before."

"What would you like to do (this week/this afternoon/this session)?"

I started with Cobuild so I suppose it's good style to end with Cobuild, too. What do you think about this example sentence for 'preparation'? .. "Elaborate preparations were being made to get me out of prison".

Elaborate preparation can make teaching a prison.

Anthony Hall, University of Klagenfurt, Austria. Keen birdwatcher and ex-footballer.

TRAINER TALKS

At the IATEFL Conference, Edinburgh 1988, I had the chance to talk to two trainers from afar. Ephraim Weinbraub told me of his work with teacher memories and Jane Revell about her work on video materials for teaching English through other subjects such as Maths and Biology.

A TALK WITH EPHRAIM WEINTRAUB, TEACHER TRAINER AT THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY, JERUSALEM

After Ephraim's workshop "The ghosts behind the blackboard" we had a chat over coffee. These are some of the things Ephraim said:

"I see the teacher as rather a lonely person, stranded on the island of the classroom, cut off from colleagues by walls and corridors and from the students by desks and blackboards. The teacher is subject to pressures and demands of all sorts .... to finish the syllabus, to get exam successes, to keep the classroom orderly, to help pupils gain jobs, to be both controlling and understanding. I have an image of the teacher as a tight-rope walker or a juggler.

Teachers are other-person oriented and tend to forget themselves. They are often under stress, burnt out. There is a great necessity for teachers to face themselves. If they don't, they can't face others. They have to have a dialogue with themselves before they can converse with their pupils. But there is a great reluctance in teachers to do this, to face the stress.

In my work in Jerusalem I take 3rd year B.A. Postgraduate students on a TEFL teacher training programme, and teach English 8 hours a week in a High School. I train teachers at the Hebrew University too and I'm a 'teacher-counsellor' for teachers and students in any subject area. So I see most sides!

Sometimes I ask people how many teachers they have had in their lives. The answers range from "I can't remember" to "75" to "one too many". I ask people to write down their memories of positive experiences and negative experiences as students and to share them in groups. Most people have strong residual memories and if you classify the memories they share you find that the clusters of characteristics around good teachers are:-

1. The teacher as expert who dazzles the pupils with knowledge.
2. The teacher as "parent", warm and accepting.
3. The teacher as a peer or fellow adult.

These characteristics reflect our underlying desires as teachers.

The characteristics clustering around the "black ghosts" or bad teachers memories are:-

1. The teacher as attacker, punisher,aggressor, or even ...
2. The teacher as sadist.
3. The teacher as incompetent or just "no good"!

Once teachers or students have shared their memories and discussed them they realise that there is both a good and bad teacher in all of us, and that it's okay to feel anger inside but how we channel it is a matter of moral responsibility.

What is essential is that we integrate our memories, our experiences into our initial or pre-service training so that the "ghosts" of teachers past are acknowledged and faced. Teaching technique is not unimportant but it is empty unless the ghosts have been dealt with. Once each individual's good and bad ghosts have been identified they can then be referred to by peers or the trainer throughout the course. Let's suppose someone has a bad ghost called Mr. Barnaby and a good one called Miss Martin. As the teacher with these ghosts goes through the course, the group can say "That sounds like something your Mr. Barnaby would say/do!" - or "How would Miss Martin

»

have dealt with that?" - or "That reminds me of Miss Martin!" In this way, the past can be referred to in a non-threatening way, in an evolutionary way. People can move on."

A TALK WITH JANE REVELL, AUTHOR AND TEACHER TRAINER IN THE CANARY ISLANDS

I asked Jane about her recent work in teaching English through another subject, i.e. teaching, say photography or crafts or geography in English to non-native speakers wanting to learn English.

"I've recently been involved in compiling a video made up of authentic TV sequences. It's for 11-14 year olds learning English. It's not a normal scripted EFL video, although I did work to a structural syllabus. Rather I've found educational programmes on Science, Geography and other subjects. These programmes were made for native English speakers. They are good quality TV, with good content in English. I've then screened it for linguistic constraints. So, for example, I've found some footage for the Present Simple in sequences such as "Why do elephants have trunks?" and "How do you cool a cuppa in the quickest way?" Once I'd sorted through the TV programmes to find good films with interesting content within the linguistic constraints I had, I took it to some native speaker teachers to see how they felt they could use it.

The teachers came up with two main questions:-

1. How can I use the video when the pupils don't know the subject content, let alone the English?

2. How can I use the video when I don't know the subject content myself?

I would answer the first question by saying that pupils often know more than teachers about elephants or tea or whatever so they can be the "knowers" for a change. Secondly, it's quite okay for people not to know the content. If you watch the video, then you'll know. It's a good reason for both teachers and students to watch the video! You can learn things!

It's interesting that native English speakers reacted this way. Perhaps it is the case that native-speaking language teachers go into E.F.L. because it's "content-secure". They have a natural competence in the language that gives them security. If asked to branch out into new content areas like Maths or Geography or Science they may feel insecure in the subject.

On the other hand maybe some native-speaking teachers will feel the need for more content, for something more to get their teeth into since the language itself need not present them with challenge. These teachers may welcome English through content subjects warmly.

Either way, I see some possible solutions for teachers who are native speakers:-

- Teachers can do "research" themselves into the new content.

- Teachers can be trained in the new content.

- Teachers and students can join together in joint discovery via the material.

But for non-native teachers, already struggling with the language they are trying to teach, and often working with large classes of unmotivated students, we can't really ask more of them. Perhaps the solution here is to have inter-disciplinary, cross-curriculum contact. One foreign language teacher could team-teach with one content teacher and they can teach the language and the subject together. Alternatively, the foreign language teacher could teach some of the content subject but then have a chance to ask questions to the subject teacher later. Of course this is not a new idea in itself. Primary School teachers (such as the ones shown in the Old British Council "Teaching Observed" videos) have been doing this for years. It does raise some very interesting issues however, such as, can the publishers provide suitable material for this sort of venture, for example?

We can't train EFL teachers to know 20 different other subject so our choices are to

(a) help them accept their own insecurity in the other subject areas

(b) help them to team-teach with subject teachers

(c) run cross-curricular teacher training courses. Ideas would be given out and then everyone would work out the ramifications of the ideas for their subject area. Discussion would follow on both the content and language details implied

(d) run teacher training courses where the higher order cognitive skills that cut across language and subject skills, are taught. "

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TEACHER ECHOING AND MORE by Virginia LoCastro

Reading Seth Lindstromberg's article on "Teaching Echoing" in the Spring 1988 issue of "The Teacher Trainer" struck a chord and started me thinking of another common teacher behaviour - moving up physically close to students - I've observed in classes taught in New York and then here in Japan.

This other example of teacher behaviour is related to teacher echoing; in addition to repeating a student's response, teachers will sometimes move up close to the student who's answering a question. When I've asked teachers I've observed, particularly in Japan, the reason they echo a student's response, they explain they do so as they fear other students in the class won't have heard what the responding student said. In order to hear what the student is saying so that they can then echo it for the entire class, they will move up physically close to the responding student. Both are very practical and natural responses to a problem; both are examples of behaviour done out of awareness. Needless to say, little thought is given to the effects of the behaviour in terms of classroom management as well as in terms of facilitating learning. These two patterns result in a dialogue between the teacher and one student, causing the other students to tune out, to feel frustrated because they can't hear what's going on, or to experience a variety of other reactions.

Another possible rationale for moving physically close to the student may come from the desire to break the pattern of always standing at the front of the room, a notion trainee teachers have been exposed to not infrequently recently. At least one teacher gave that as a motivation for her behaviour.

Furthermore, moving close to the student is understood by some teachers as a way of showing empathy for the student, as a sign of encouragement to the student. Yet teachers may not realize that a student could experience such closeness as a form of pressure, almost intimidation; it may take an observer's second pair of eyes to see the student's muscles and even whole body tense up and somehow become smaller as the teacher stands there.

In addition, there may be yet other reasons for the echoing and physical closeness. In some cultures, such as in Japanese culture, women students in particular tend to speak softly, with their heads down, as that behaviour is considered to be more feminine. It can be a problem to help such students learn to speak more loudly in class. Again, the teacher tries to cope with a very real problem. Needless to say, the teacher's moving close to the student combined with echoing aggravates the situation as the students learn the teacher will do some of their work for them.

Once the teacher or trainee who has been observed comes to realize that these patters of interaction may have disadvantages, then I suggest an alternative. I demonstrate or describe another way that comes from a public lecture at Columbia University in New York City several years ago. There wasn't a microphone for the question-and-answer period at the end of the formal lecture. The speaker went away from the podium, onto the floor, and would go to the opposite side of the room from the participant who was asking a question. This forced the person to project and speak loudly enough so the speaker as well as the other people in the audience could hear. It worked!

When I use it with my own classes, it may cause some students to dissolve into giggles. Then I explain the method behind the madness and most of the students accept and try. Some may even make it into a game of sorts, seeing it as a challenge to learn to speak loudly enough so all can hear. With some of the very quiet ones, it can, however, cause more self-consciousness at first. With those students, I don't refer to their softness again, but continue to stand away from them and slowly they do begin to speak more loudly. Most of the time, it does work.

A drastic solution? Teacher echoing of a student's response and moving close physically to the student may serve positive purposes in some cases. The teacher may be doing both out of sincerity, to help others hear and to show empathy for the student answering the question. So a dialogue between the teacher/trainee and observer/trainer may help make the limitations clear. When those two patterns become habits, out of conscious awareness, then they need to be looked at, re-evaluated, and used only when they serve those positive purposes.

As Seth Lindstromberg states, echoing is not natural behaviour outside the language classroom. Nor is moving physically close to hear someone in many circumstances, in particular with strangers. However, if a teacher has got a class of 40+ students, the two behavioural patterns are understandable reactions. Moreover, some teachers have reasons that they can verbalize to explain their behaviour. Therefore the extra pair of eyes of the observer/trainer can help the teacher/trainee become aware that different interaction patterns may be needed. Part of the classroom practitioner's skills and competence is an awareness of our own habitual patterns of behaviour as teachers and the capacity to change them according to other variables of classroom settings such as class size, task type, and students' backgrounds.

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The following article represents Andy Baxter's first attempt to 'Brechtianise' TEFL. Here is his foreword.

We can only 'train' people to do things if we know how those things should be done. As there are a thousand conflicting theories about both language and language learning, how are we to evaluate the performance of our 'trainees'? "Overnight the universe has lost its centre, and by morning it has countless ones. So that now each - and none - is regarded as its centre". "Judgement must always be passed with complete solemnity - because it's such rot". Brecht was no teacher trainer, but, he may still be able to tell us a thing or two .....

TEACHING LEMON AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: DRAMA IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING by Andy Baxter

No, this is not another article about how to set up roleplays, or how to get all your learners to imagine they are fish. This article wants to talk about Foreign Language Teaching as Drama. We have all seen books and articles which discuss the 'Learner's Role', or 'The Role of the Teacher'. As teacher trainers we deal in such currency. Like ambitious parents, we guide our children onto the stage. We polish their shoes, put final adjustments to the bows in their hair, and give them an only-just-perceptible shove onto the classroom stage, watching adoringly from the wings. Many commercial schools are the closest equivalent we have today of the great 19th Century actor-managers. We are a kind of RADA for the nice middle-class graduates who want, as they say in drink adverts, 'just a hint of exotic faraway places'.

All the world may be a stage, but the classroom is closer than most. Not simply because we are at the front (even when we pretend to sit, unnoticed, in the back row), but also because of the role (that word again!) that 'communicative teaching' forces the learner to adopt. I am going to introduce a word here: Empathy. This means, according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, 'the power of projecting one's personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation'; and it was Aristotle who saw the act of empathy between stage and auditorium as the theatrical experience. The definition has rarely been challenged since.

Learners, too, are expected to empathise. I often complain that my learners are unwilling to suspend their disbelief. Any teacher has to be aware of a number of 'authenticities' which float around any classroom. One of these - classroom authenticity - is what makes lessons possible. Imagine teaching a class full of the kind of learners who always asked 'Why?' - I'm sure we've all experienced these, both in Teacher Training and TEFL. We would be unable to teach 'communicatively' (whatever that means). Imagine a class of trainees or students sitting in front of you now:

> 'Right, you three are going to read this article, you three this one, and you three this. OK? Then when you finish, we're going to swop groups, and get all the information together. Yes, Carlos?'
> 'Why?'
> 'Ah, well ... You see, this is what happens in real life. You read an article in the Sun, someone else in the Mirror, and the third in the Independent. Then you get together and talk about it, don't you?'
> 'No. If I have access to all three articles and I'm interested in the subject (and I'm not in this one), then I'd read all three ... '

It would be difficult to teach Carlos, wouldn't it? Luckily, none of our learners speak good enough English, and none of our trainees know enough, to challenge us (we hope! - or could this be deliberate?).

Of course, they don't challenge us because they believe in us, as experts, as people who stand up at the front. The wonderful thing about empathy is, you see, that they 'project their personality' into us; and, of course, in so doing manage only to see things as we see them. So when we suggest things like 'Jigsaw Reading' everyone says 'What a clever idea!', and does it. It is self-evidently good.

THE PHILOSOPHER: (to Actor) ... Probably you'll have repeatedly to get inside the person you are representing, his situation, his physical characteristics, his modes of thought. It's one of the operations involved in building the character up. It's entirely consistent with our purposes, so long as you know how to get out of him again. There's a vast difference between somebody's having a picture of something, which demands imagination, and an illusion, which demands gullibility. We need imagination for our purposes; we want not to create illusions but to see that the audience too gets a picture of the matter in hand. (p55)

This represents part of Brecht's attempts' [1] to escape Aristotelian theatre. He demands a distance between do-er and done-to, and any device that achieves this A-effect (A for Alienation) we will call an Alienation Device. Brecht believed that the real audience was not the open-mouthed, teary-eyed spectator, but rather the man or woman smoking: 'As you know, a man smoking is in an attitude highly conducive to observation. He leans back, thinks his own thoughts, relaxes in his seat, enjoys everything from an assured position, is only half with it' (p19) - the kind of person who would shout out 'No, that's wrong!' in the middle of the play. In other words, 'the audience is not entirely "carried away"; it need not conform psychologically, adopt a fatalistic attitude towards fate as portrayed ... it is free, and sometimes even encouraged, to imagine a different course of events or to try to find one'. (p104). As an early

stage in this process, Brecht wanted to destroy the fourth wall ...

THE DRAMATURG: ... Plays are usually performed as if the stage had four walls, not three; the fourth being where the audience is sitting ...

THE ACTOR: You get the idea? ... It's just like somebody looking through a keyhole and seeing a scene involving people who've no idea they are not alone. Actually, of course, we arrange it all so that everyone gets a good view. Only we conceal the fact it's been arranged ...

THE PHILOSOPHER: ... Do you think we need this elaborate secret understanding between the actors and yourself?

THE WORKER: I don't need it. But perhaps the actors do.

THE ACTOR: For realistic acting it's considered essential.

THE WORKER: I'm for realistic acting.

THE PHILOSOPHER: But it's also a reality that you are sitting in a theatre, and not with your eye glued to a keyhole. How can it be realistic to try and gloss that over? We want to demolish the fourth wall: I herewith announce our joint operation. In future please don't be bashful; just show us that you've arranged everything in the way best calculated to help us understand.

THE ACTOR: That's official, is it, that from now we can look down at you and even talk to you?

THE PHILOSOPHER: Of course. Any time it furthers the demonstration. (p52)

Once the wall begins to go, the natives may start getting restless:

THE PHILOSOPHER: (to actor) Yes, you are rather a dictatorial character, aren't you? It feels as if you're always dictating when you are on stage, too. I'm supposed to do what you want, without getting a moment to consider whether I want the same as you ... (p20)

We all think that there are 'obvious' ways to teach - the history of FLT is littered (almost litter-ally) with so-called 'natural' methods and approaches of language learning. Language, too, has a 'natural' system. There is 'Natural Order' (for non-syllabus fans), and an order so traditional that syllabus fans might call that 'natural' too. We, as teachers, coursebook writers and users, etc., impose our own order upon the confused data we call language. We chop it up into 'manageable' chunks, select bits of it, order it, decide how important it is, and so on. What do we base these decisions on? Well, it's obvious, isn't it? Or is it?

'The self-evident - i.e., the particular shape our consciousness gives our experience - is resolved into its components when counter-acted by the A-effect and turned into a new form of the evidence. An imposed schema is being broken up here. The individual's own experiences correct or confirm what he has taken over from the community. The original act of discovery is repeated.' (p102)

The A-effect - the destruction of empathy, the restoration of critical distance - is not an easy thing to live with. We have already said that a lesson would be impossible if we had a class full of people like Carlos. But only lessons as they exist now. New wine needs new bottles:

THE DRAMATURG: There's really no longer anything surprising in the fact that art was almost ruined at first by applying it to a new business ... without abandoning one of its preconceptions about itself. Its entire apparatus was designed for the business of making men accept their fate. The apparatus was ruined when the part of man's fate in its productions was suddenly taken by man himself. In short, it wanted to promote the new business while remaining the old art. Accordingly it did everything in a hesitant, half-hearted, selfish, conscience-ridden way; but nothing suits art worse than this. It was only by sacrificing itself that it became itself again ... That's why some people, on seeing the new art so apparently feeble - or rather, enfeebled; enfeebled by its new tasks without those tasks having been satisfactorily solved - regretfully turned their backs and preferred to give the new tasks up (p97)

Of course, what we should say is that it would be impossible to give the same kind of class with this kind of learner. Every teacher trainer sees their job as the developing of competent teachers, but this begs a large question of what a competent teacher is or does. At present, I would suggest, the evaluation of any teacher is based on his or her ability to create an empathetic relationship with a class. And, without doubt, they succeed - classrooms today are full of teachers and learners cruising on automatic pilot, producing interesting classes. If the activities go smoothly, if they are self-evidently good, the class is a success. The trainee has performed well. The learners have performed well. We do seem, as teacher-trainers, to measure our success by how well our trainees train their learners to accept current TEFL methodology. What trainees will do in an observed class has become largely predictable, yet Stenhouse, writing in 1975, wrote that 'education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behaviourial outcomes of the students (or trainees) unpredictable.' [2]

So what is a 'bad lesson'? When we ask trainees to criticise their peers, what do they normally say? At first, they will say what they think, while we sit back and say to ourselves 'Fancy criticising a tiny thing like that when there's that huge self-evident problem to be talked about'. Later, the trainees will consciously criticise things in the lesson that they think we as trainers want them to criticise - to signal to us that 'I understand that this is what you want'. A kind of crawling to teacher.[3] Finally, this all becomes sub-conscious. The trainees have fully assimilated our values - there is total empathy as regards what constitutes a 'problem'. It has become self-evident.

'Well obviously', you say, 'how else can we assess trainees?'.

THE PHILOSOPHER: ... I'd judge your mastery according to how little empathy you managed with and not in the usual way according to how much you could generate.

THE DRAMATURG: Could we put it like this? At present people are called amateurs if they can't generate empathy; won't they one day be called amateurs if they can't do

without it?. (p56)

When we, or our trainees, evaluate someone's ability to teach, are we merely asking if the lesson was self-evidently good - if it Looked Like A Lesson Should? Or whether it was a good lesson? And what - if anything - do either of these questions have to do with how people learn?

THE DRAMATURG: You can't say we're free from criticism. What flops, what notices!

THE PHILOSOPHER: You get critizised when your attempts at illusion fail. Just like a hypnotist who fails to bring off his hypnosis. The customer is criticizing an apple that is a lemon.

THE DRAMATURG: Oh, so you think he ought to criticize the lemon?

THE PHILOSOPHER: That's it. But the lemon's got to be a lemon. (p27)

1 Brecht's theories of the theatre are outlined in 'The Messingkauf Dialogues' (Eyre Methuen, 1965), which takes the form of a dialogue between a Philosopher, an Actor, a Dramaturg (or literary adviser), and various others.

2 Stenhouse, L., quoted in 'Syllabus design as a Critical Process', C.N. Candlin, ELT Docs. 118, Pergaman/BC, 1984.

3 This is not intended as a criticism of trainees. We all do it. If there is any blame, it should fall on us for encouraging such practices.

Biography

Andy Baxter has worked for 9 years as a teacher and teacher trainer in Spain, Portugal, Soviet Armenia and Britain. His main interests lie in developing the curriculum, and he has written a learners' handbook in an attempt to reverse the pedagogical lobotomies he feels most teachers inspire in their learners.

WHO READS "THE TEACHER TRAINER"?

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ON TRANSFORMING LANGUAGE TEACHERS INTO LANGUAGE EDUCATORS IN SRI LANKA

by Andrew Thomas - Higher Institute for English Education, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO BE A LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATOR

A language teacher educator anywhere needs first and foremost competence in language system and use, which s/he may have to impart to trainees, as part of their training, and which they, in turn, by definition, have to impart to learners. This we may call simply 'language competence'.

Secondly, s/he needs 'pedagogic competence' to teach language, which s/he has to impart to the language teacher trainee. We should, perhaps, more strictly term this 'pedagogico-linguistic competence' in that language teaching is a special skill where, though it may share some common features with teaching in general, language and pedagogy are inextricably intertwined.

Thirdly, s/he needs the 'language awareness' which will not only facilitate training but which s/he may have to impart to trainees, given that they also need it to facilitate their teaching.

While I recognise that in certain training situations, such as in Faculties of Education of Universities, there is often a division of labour between the language instructor, the methodologist and the linguist whose job it is to impart the above categories of competence and awareness, it is, for reasons of integration, desirable that a language teacher educator should be able to impart and, therefore, have all three. This is, in fact, expected of College of Education lecturers in Sri Lanka.

So what special categories of competence and awareness does a language teacher educator need to impart all these to the language teacher? The first is the ability to teach language teacher education courses, such as in institutionalized settings, while the second is the ability to supervise teachers in the field. The first we may call 'instructional competence' and the second 'supervisory competence'. Each also involves the ability to design teacher education courses and field programmes respectively, as well as take part in them, and an ability to evaluate such courses and programmes.

Finally, language teacher educators must have a higher level of awareness which will enable them to see how all parts of the language teaching and language learning 'operation' fit together. This awareness will embrace all pedagogic and linguistic considerations, including psychological and sociological ones and for want of a more appropriate term, we may call it 'pedagogico-linguistic' awareness.

Thus the categories of competence and awareness of the language teacher educator incorporate

those of the language teacher which, in turn, incorporate the language competence of the learner/user.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATOR TRAINING

If teachers teach the way they were taught (Altman 1984:78), presumably teacher educators train the way they were trained. If awareness-raising and experiential procedures, well-balanced, lead to effective teaching (Ellis 1986:91), then presumably a balance of these two types of procedure will lead to effective training.

It is important, however, to understand these terms properly. The term 'awareness-raising' denotes what the procedure is intended to achieve, without actually describing the procedure. The term 'experiential', on the other hand, does denote the nature of the procedure, but does not precisely indicate what it is that is to be experienced.

Experiential procedures will allow language teacher educator trainees to experience the roles that they are expected to perform, either with peers or in training practice. Thus, at teacher educator level, for example, peer counselling, and counselling practice with real teachers, would be more appropriate than peer teaching and teaching practice.

As regards awareness-raising, how do we do this - through lecture or discovery? I would say the latter through, for example, group problem-solving procedures, where the object of awareness-raising is the topic of discussion, i.e. language for language awareness, pedagogico-linguistic issues for pedagogico-linguistic awareness. Lesson transcript analysis can serve as a vehicle for either kind of awareness-raising, though for wider language awareness it may be necessary to go to samples of non-pedagogic discourse. At teacher educator level analysis of a transcript of a teacher-counselling encounter may be useful.

THE SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE AT HIEE

So far two three-month certificate courses have been run. Both have employed the combination of awareness-raising and experiential procedures discussed.

Course One is "ELT materials and techniques" and allows teachers to go into new materials and techniques with a view to transmitting the 'message' to others (Cumarantunge 1985).

Course Two is "Principles and methods of language teacher education" and is for those who might be expected to have the exit competence of Course One.

The two courses share a common set of General Components, giving essential background with content and emphases appropriately adjusted to the nature of the particular course. Each course has its own set of Specialized Components which reflect the very nature of the particular course. The need for these two sets of components arises from the fact that the course participants cannot be expected to have the essential academic background knowledge necessary to enter into specialized courses of this nature.

Some language teacher educators and several language teachers, some with and some without previous language teacher education experience, have returned to or taken on language teacher education roles nationwide on completion of either of these courses.

REFLECTION ON EXPERIENCE AND THEORY

If we take the simplest case of language teacher educators who need to improve themselves as language teacher educators, it might be reasonable to suppose that sufficient awareness and competence development at the level of language teaching and language teacher education might be imparted by Course 2. It may, however, be argued that a more thorough job might be done if the language teacher educators took a step back, so to speak, and re-oriented themselves as key teachers through Course 1 before improving as teacher educators through Course 2, this way gaining the awareness and competence required at one level before proceeding to gain those required at the next.

If this solution were adopted, one could argue that the set of General Components need only be done once, proceeding to first one set of Specialized Components (those of Course 1) and then the other (those of Course 2). It could further be argued that an interval of teacher education experience between the first set of Specialized Components and the second could have its advantages in rooting the principles of Course 1 more firmly in reality before proceeding to the business of fully-fledged teacher education. The resulting course structure would then be a longer course than either of the original courses but not double.

In the most complex case of would-be teacher educators who have teaching experience but no language teacher education experience of any kind, the thought of them making the step in awareness and competence to the level of key teachers, plus the extra step to the level of language teacher educators, acquiring the necessary additional awareness and competence that this entails, through one 10-week course, such as Course 2, is a daunting prospect. For such language teachers to become fully effective language teacher educators, the new course structure mentioned above with its suggested interval of experience, seems all the more appropriate.

This article is intended as an invitation to discussion rather than a blueprint for the future.

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Voluntary Service Overseas (V.S.O.) is a registered U.K. charity sending over 600 volunteers a year to some 40 Third World countries. V.S.O. is distinctive as a charity in sending people not money. The volunteers, aged between 20 and 65 and recruited from all walks of life, have their recruitment, training, air fares and insurance paid for by V.S.O. They often leave secure jobs for two years ▶▶ of tough, unpredictable experience and with little anticipation of any real material reward. V.S.O. recruits over 250 teachers each year for jobs in Primary, Secondary, and Special Education though the priority area is TEFL and TESL. There follows an account of the difficult task of training EFL teachers for very different situations.

ON COURSE WITH VSO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS by

Aileen Bloomer, Felicity Breet and Lynne Cameron (with support from colleagues at VSO and members of the VSO ELT tutor group)

Nick is 23 years old and has been working as a solicitor for one year in London but is now getting ready to leave for two years in Sierra Leone as a teacher of English as a Foreign Language in a state secondary school. Chris is 58 years old and, having just taken early retirement from the British Primary system, is getting ready to go to Bhutan for two years where work as a primary school teacher and adviser on primary education is waiting. These are just two of the 120 English Language Teaching volunteers posted each year to go and teach in the Less Developed Countries who have requested a volunteer through the programmes set up and administered by Voluntary Services Overseas. People apply to VSO for very different reasons and from very varied personal and professional backgrounds. There are, however, some features that apply to most of the volunteers who come to VSO to volunteer as teachers of English. Most of them have some experience of teaching English as a Foreign or as a Second Language. They have all usually finished a year's teaching or teacher training and arrive at the course weary, if not exhausted, anxious about what they will have to do, excited about and looking forward to the new opportunities with that nervous anticipation so familiar to all who have worked overseas, and uncertain about exactly what they will find when they reach their post. Highly motivated, very enthusiastic about what the immediate future will bring, they are prepared to be very flexible to whatever may come and this article will describe the ELT training courses they attend before departure.

The process of being selected is a complex one: after selection by VSO, the volunteer is matched to a suitable posting, the different postings available in any given year being dependent on the requests that VSO have received from various countries. The first stage in the training cycle is the Post Selection Weekend, at which many of the social and personal issues involved in volunteering to work overseas are discussed. Each volunteer also attends a country briefing to learn something about the country and the conditions that they can expect to find. The volunteer will also be given a local language course, either in the UK before they leave or immediately on arrival in the country, and will be given training and advice on health in tropical countries and on first aid. An integral part of the pre-departure training programme is the skills course, where the volunteer's individual professional skills will be focussed towards the posting in question.

There are two major approaches to the design of ELT courses and the allocation of a volunteer to a course depends on the amount and type of experience of ELT that the volunteer already has. Those volunteers with extensive EFL/ESL experience, going out to posts where the greater part of their professional time will be spent in teacher training, attend the so-called negotiated skills course, where they themselves create the programme for the week-long course based on an analysis of their own professional needs. For the purposes of this article, though, we are concentrating on the more traditional course that is followed by the great majority of volunteers, whose previous experience, while extremely relevant and valid, requires a more specifically directed course.

The courses, which are between one and two weeks long, are arranged for the end of each of the two recruitment cycles in VSO and so are held in January and July/August, immediately prior to volunteers' departure.

Those participating on the course will include the volunteers themselves, an Education Development Officer from the ELT desk in VSO and the tutors who, like the volunteers, will be arriving from a very wide variety of professional backgrounds but who have qualifications and overseas experience in common. Many of the tutors are former volunteers, and they will share a broadly similar approach to language teaching and teacher training. They will already have met to plan the course in response to the specific needs of the volunteers and their individual projects and in accordance with the outline plans made by the twice yearly tutors' meetings. As far as possible, there is a ratio of one tutor to four volunteers, and these tutor groups are of particular importance in the preparation and evaluation of teaching practice. The courses are intensive, with a 12-hour day from 9am - 9pm.

The course begins with the essential ice-breakers and introductions that mark the beginning of most training courses, so that there is, from the beginning, some sense of group identity, which has a marked effect on the progress of the course. All the courses, whether one or two weeks in length, follow similar patterns, with a set of core items, which will be followed by all volunteers, and then a range of options, from which the individual volunteer selects those which will

relate more specifically to the individual requirements of his/her project.

The major core components of any course are:

1. Introduction to ELT

This involves a consideration of what language teaching is and how it differs from other types of teaching. Foreign or second language teaching and learning is seen as not simply the transfer of knowledge but is essentially the development of practical skills. A very wide variety of methods and approaches are examined and demonstrated. Questions relating to syllabus design and planning units of teaching are investigated.

2. Language Awareness

Volunteers think about English from a socio-linguistic point of view, in terms not only of variety within the British Isles, but of the many international varieties of English which they will come across in the period of time overseas and which may conflict with the standard English of the textbook which they are expected to teach. Sessions about the structure of English are held regularly throughout the course to try to increase the volunteer's explicit knowledge of their own language.

3. Project Needs

An early component in any course will be consideration of the needs of the individual project of any individual volunteer. By comparing the skills that they already possess with the predicted skills that will be required in the project, the volunteers can begin to build up an action list of specific skills that need to be acquired during the course. The information about the projects is gathered together in the Country Boxes - with information about syllabuses, examinations, educational systems and reports from volunteers who may have worked in similar projects in the same country. This action list will help the volunteer in their choice of option sessions on the skills course.

4. Skills sessions

A major component on any VSO ELT course is a series of workshop sessions focussing on the four major language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and on working within an integrated framework. In all cases, the tutors demonstrate many of the different techniques for improving the students' ability in these areas, and the emphasis of such sessions is always on practical demonstration and not theoretical discussion. The emphasis is on the use of low-tech teaching aids and volunteers are also shown how high-tech methods can be adapted to situations where the technology is not available or where the electricity supply may be unreliable, or reliably unavailable at the right time. Wherever possible, the textbooks that are currently in use in the different countries are used as a basis for the input session, which will also focus on how these can best be exploited by the teacher.

Some thought has been given recently to the question of the content of the Language Learning materials and an innovation has been the introduction on occasional courses of what we call Developmentally Relevant Materials. This refers to the use of texts dealing with topics of specific relevance to the Third World communities, as a basis for language learning activities.

5. Assessment and testing of language

Working again practically (from samples of students' work) the current theories of testing and assessing language learning are considered, with particular reference to the examination and assessment procedures that the volunteers will meet when they are in post.

6. Teaching Practice

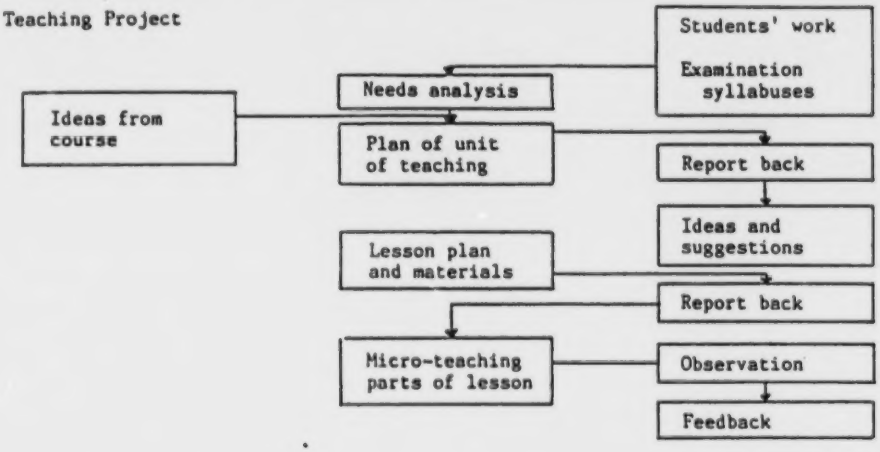
TP has always been a very important part of the skills courses and though tutors are very aware that the TP provided is not always comparable to the teaching situation that the volunteers would find overseas, it has always been considered valuable to have some practice in using some of the techniques demonstrated during the course. TP students vary very much depending on the location of the ELT course and have ranged from TP with groups of children learning English as a Second Language in Bradford to groups of Italian students learning English as a Foreign Language in London. Within an ELT course, a considerable amount of time will be devoted to teaching practice, with teaching practice preparation and feedback being organised within the individual tutor groups. Volunteers who are going to be teacher trainers learn about observation and feedback techniques through active participation under the guidance of a tutor.

Latterly, it has not always been possible to provide TP at the different centres and indeed in some groups it has been decided that in a very short course, the time could perhaps be more profitably used in some peer-micro-teaching activities.

A development to supplement teaching practice has been the Teaching Project, where groups of volunteers identify language items from a needs analysis based on students' work, in relation to examination requirements. The groups then plan, in outline, a unit of teaching for one or two items and, from this, develop a balanced lesson plan, which is presented to the other groups for comments. The last stage of the project involves planning the lesson in detail, using materials that might be available in country and creating any supplementary materials needed. Individual volunteers then micro-teach about 10 minutes of the lesson. Thus, each volunteer goes away with a selection of different approaches to a variety of language teaching problems.

As the course progresses, option sessions are decided upon and included in the programme. In the past, a wide variety of topics have been considered in these sessions, such as classroom management techniques, the setting up and supervision of a school library, a drama group and an English club, the teaching of »

Fig. 1 The Teaching Project



basic literacy skills and the teaching of literature, producing teaching aids with minimal resources, the organisation of TP for those going to teacher training posts or even elementary linguistics. In many cases, volunteers arrive with considerable expertise in many of these areas and they are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience with the others.

No teacher training course would be complete without some form of evaluation - either at the end or as an on-going feature of the course - and this is certainly true of VSO ELT courses. Volunteers and tutors are working together on a very intensive course and they spend a lot of time discussing the various issues arising from the particular workshop sessions, experiences during teaching practice, options etc., discussions which almost invariably widen out to include many other related issues. On the last day, volunteers are asked to give their opinion of the course on individual evaluation sheets. They are also asked to evaluate the course as a group and to present their comments to the Co-ordinator and tutors as part of the final session. So, the process of evaluation and development continues, as these comments will be included in the course reports and discussed at the next tutors' meeting ready for the next cycle of courses.

Immediate evaluation, while useful and interesting, is not always the most reliable and tutors or VSO staff members look to reports from the field to assess the relevance of the training course to the needs of the volunteers as they perceive their needs after a period overseas. What could be done to improve the courses for the next group of departing volunteers? One of the final requests from tutor to volunteer at the end of the course is to keep in touch and to send back any materials or information that they think would be helpful to future departing volunteers.

Participants leave the course, tired but usually satisfied, feeling that the period has been stimulating, productive and, ultimately, enjoyable - for tutor and volunteer alike.

But this is only the beginning for the volunteers who set off to their projects where, despite all the preparation, they continually have to cope with the unexpected and find ways of putting "the course wisdom into practice" in the words of one volunteer from Indonesia.

JOURNAL EXCHANGES

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

Aula de Ingles	(Spain)
IATEFL Newsletter	(UK)
English Language Teaching Journal	(UK)
Cross Currents	(Japan)
English Teachers' Journal	(Israel)
Modern English Teacher	(UK)
Moderna Sprak	(Sweden)
RELC Journal	(Singapore)
The Portuguese Newsletter	(Portugal)
Forum	(USA)
Practical English Teaching	(UK)
Focus on English	(India)
TESOL Newsletter	(USA)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEND SOMETHING IN TO "THE TEACHER TRAINER"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing and 49 characters a line. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

TRAINER BACKGROUND

This series helps to keep trainers in the know about new or re-thought ideas in teaching so that they can be of more use to teachers seeking their help. This article is on last lessons. We would welcome other ideas from readers interested in finishing courses as well as starting them!

A LAST LESSON - ending a course gracefully by Ruth Wajnryb

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Many are the suggestions we as teachers and teacher trainers receive about how to start a course. We have all refined our own particular set of "ice-breakers" that do the trick for us - activities that reduce the strangeness of the first meeting of teacher and students, relaxing the learners into each other's company, introducing the teacher in a non-threatening and familiarising way, and generally easing everyone painlessly into a new situation.

Rarely, however, is much attention given to the last lesson of a course, that point of exit from now-familiar ground. While "exiting" from a learning situation may lack the pedagogic importance of "entering", its significance cannot be totally ignored. Learners will leave the course we give them with special memories of the people they met there and the experiences they had. Without doubt this will have an impact on their overall attitude to the target language and to target language speakers. Since we hope they will continue learning after the course is over, the more positive the "memory package" they take away with them, the better.

For these reasons it seems to me that some attention ought to be given to the last lesson of the course. This article is devoted to one suggestion for easing students out of a course as gently and as gracefully as they were eased into it. It sets the mood with a story-telling session which is followed by an open-ended activity that calls on the learners' own experiences. The theme of the story is one of memory and remembering.

STORY-TELLING

Set the stage for a story-telling session. Have ready a "skeleton" of the story (see below). Preteach any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar. Relax the students in preparation for the listening. Then tell (don't read) the story. During the telling, use your "skeleton" as an aid to memory and scan your students' faces for clues to their comprehension, backtracking, paraphrasing, amplifying or embroidering as the need dictates (1).

STORY SKELETON

The very small boy and the very old woman (2)

A story about a very small boy and a very old woman - neighbours - small boy lived with mother and father - in house next door to old people's home.

Little boy knew all the people there - one old woman played piano - one old man told scary stories - another old man was crazy about cricket - ran errands for one old woman who walked with wooden stick - another old man had a voice like a giant.

Favourite person - Miss Nancy - over ninety years old.

One day - small boy heard parents talking about Miss Nancy:
"Poor old thing" said mother.
"Why is she a poor old thing?" asked boy.
"Because she's lost her memory" said father.
"Not surprising" said mother "she's over 96".

"What's a memory?" asked boy - always asked questions when he didn't understand something. But they weren't listening to him any more.

Curious - wanted to know more - so went next door.

Spoke to old man who told scary stories.
"What's a memory?"
"Something from long ago, my boy, something from long ago".

Called on old woman who walked with a stick.
"What's a memory?"
"Something that makes you laugh, my boy, something that makes you laugh".

Called on old man, who was crazy about cricket.
"What's a memory?"
"Something that makes you cry, my boy, something that makes you cry".

Called on the old lady who played piano.
"What's a memory?"
"Something warm, my child, something warm".

Called on the old man who had a voice like a giant.
"What's a memory?"
"Something as precious as gold, my boy, something as precious as gold".

So - small boy went home again - looked for memories to give Miss Nancy - because she had lost her own.

Found box of sea shells he had collected long ago last summer - put them gently in a basket.

Found puppet on string that always made everyone laugh - put that in basket too.

Remembered sadly medal grandfather had given him - put that in too.

He went to hen house - took a fresh warm egg from under hen.

»

On way to Miss Nancy's - picked up his football - as precious as gold.

Arrived at Miss Nancy's - gave her each thing one by one.

"What a dear strange child you are to bring me all these wonderful things".

Then ... she started to remember ...

Put a shell to her ear - remembered going to beach by tram long ago - how hot she felt in her long button-up boots.

Smiled at puppet on string - remembered the one she had shown to her little sister who had laughed with her mouth full of porridge.

Touched medal - talked sadly about her big brother whom she had loved who went away to war and never returned.

Held the warm egg in her hands - told the small boy about eggs she had found in bird's nest in her aunt's home when she was a child.

Bounced the football to small boy - remembered day she had met him and all the good times they had had together.

And the two smiled - because Miss Nancy had found her memory - she had found it with the help of a very small boy.

ACTIVITY - "REWIND"THE COURSE

Allowing for a few moment's "digestion" after the telling of the story, ask the students to close their eyes and breathe gently. Then, in a soothing voice, tell them that this is the last lesson of the course. Remind them how long they have been on the course together. Then "walk" them back through the course - like rewinding a video - and as you do so, highlight the various experiences (or landmarks) they will have shared together. When you reach the first day of the course, have them recall their waking up that day in anticipation of the course, eating breakfast, and getting ready to come to the course; their feelings on arriving, on entering the classroom, on meeting the other students and the teacher. Then say that in a few moments you will be asking them to open their eyes, at which time they should turn to a person near them and share with that person their memories of the first day and their expectations of the weeks to come. Following that, they should "mix and mingle" freely with other students sharing and remembering in the same way.

A FINAL WORD

The lesson (and the course) may end in this way. There is no need to have a "plenary session" or full class report-back to summarise class reaction. It is more appropriate to the type and purpose of this lesson to conclude it on a one-to-one or small group level.

It is to be hoped that students will exit from the course with warm and positive feelings about the learning experiences they have shared.

NOTES

(1) For further guidance on story-telling in language learning, see Rinvolucri and Morgan, 1983 and Wajnryb, 1986.

(2) This story is based on a short story by the Australian writer, Mam Fox, entitled "Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge", which was brought to my attention by Baiba Thomson, a trainee.

REFERENCES

Rinvolucri, M. & Morgan, J., 1983 ONCE UPON TIME. Cambridge University Press.

Wajnryb, R., 1986 "Story-telling and language learning" in BABEL (Australia) Vol. 21, No. 2, August 1986.

Wajnryb, R., 1988 "A last lesson: Ending a course gracefully" in TEA NEWS Vol. 6 No. 1. Autumn 1988.

Biography

Ruth Wajnryb is the head of teacher training in TESOL at the Institute of Languages, University of New South Wales, Australia. Her book "Grammar Workout" was published in 1986.

IATEFL SIG NEWS

The IATEFL Central Committee has given the go-ahead for a new Special Interest Group (SIG) to be set up for teacher trainers. The group will start up this Spring. If you are interested please contact: Brenda Thomas, IATEFL (T.T.SIG), 3 Kingsdown Chambers, Kingsdown Park, Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 2DJ, England.

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SESSION REPORT

REPORT ON BRITISH COUNCIL SEMINAR, BY SUE INKSTER AND BOB MOXON

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Council in Paris has not held two-day seminars for quite some time, so this was a 'special event' (and we all felt very virtuous coming in on the second day, which was a Saturday).

The title was 'Training the Trainers' and the sessions were run by Peter Maingay.

Here is the original blurb on the seminar programme:

'This 2-day seminar will be partly experiential in that participants will be involved in mini-training sessions as well as a combination of discussion and workshops. The main aim of the mini-training sessions will be to look at ways in which teachers can train their learners to take on more responsibility for their own learning. The discussions and workshops will be based on observations made during these sessions and will also focus on the manner of training language teachers and the content of such courses. The following will be considered:

- ways in which teaching languages and training language teachers are similar
- different modes of teacher training
- to what extent trainers need to "know" more than their trainees

Peter Maingay has been teacher training for several years, mostly recently in Italy for the British Council. He is at present Director of the Distance Training Programme for the RSA Diploma in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language to Adults at International House. He is particularly interested in the parallels between classroom methodology and training methodology.'

If I have quoted this at some length, it is partly because I wasn't quite sure when I went along to the seminar just what we were going to do, and partly because Peter did in fact change his own programme for the seminar slightly; we didn't actually do any mini-training sessions. He explained this change in procedure at the very beginning of the seminar - it should be noted that he was extremely clear in telling us what he had planned and negotiating changes with us.

Peter asked us to consider not only what we did during the seminar, but also how we did it. In particular, he advised us to notice the way he did, or didn't, do things, adding that if he did make a mess of anything, he could always claim it had been done deliberately for us to notice! (In fact, he was very good at taking, and using, criticism.)

THE FIRST DAY - FRIDAY

There were about thirty of us on the Friday, and as an opening activity we divided into groups of six or seven and answered a list of questions on the OHP about our own teacher training experience, if any, and future training expectations. We discussed our answers. Peter then came round and gave each person within the group a letter of the alphabet, telling us that the A's and B's from all the groups would be put together to consolidate the information from all the groups. So we put our answers on paper (these sheets of paper were later given to Peter, who used them to familiarise himself with our various situations.) While the A's and B's collected all the information and produced a profile of the whole group, the C's and D's were put into one group, and the E's, F's and G's into another, both these sub-groups being instructed to brainstorm on the whole idea of 'openers', 'ice-breakers' etc.

Peter later agreed with us that this activity had not been entirely successful, although it did raise some interesting issues about how you open a course, a session etc. It did help us and him to know who was present (and since he wasn't afraid to try out something that didn't quite come off, and admit it, this was a useful example for us to think about in our own teaching/training styles.)

It turned out that there were about 25% French 'teachers of English' present (some from secondary schools, some from the university hierarchy, inspectors, etc.), the remaining 75% being native speaking teachers of English with a nice mix of English, American, Irish, Australian etc., most of them working in business schools, language schools, companies etc. Some people had never done any teacher training, others were involved with training teachers for qualifying exams, some taught applied linguistics, some were secondary school inspectors. Some like myself were mainly concerned with keeping up with the latest pedagogical trends and disseminating information to our colleagues.

The session after coffee began with work in groups on worksheet A. We then went through it with Peter and concluded that there are no hard and fast rules - a lot depends on the individual and the group concerned, but interesting points arose from the way we did things: silence is good sometimes (time for reflexion too), and it's up to the individual to use the silence, and, and here is the leitmotiv of the seminar, the process is as important as the product. We also commented on the need for flexibility and the importance of rhythm (you can't push the pace and individuals need different amounts of time etc.).

WORKSHEET A

Look through the following list of statements about teacher training. Decide a) which ones you agree with; b) which ones you disagree with; c) which ones you are not clear about and would like to discuss further.

1. A teacher trainer should plan for a variety of 'modes' in T.T. sessions.
2. A teacher trainer should be a good language teacher.
3. Everyone has an inner model, albeit unconscious, of what a good teacher training session is, so teacher trainers should draw this out of trainees and take account of those different models.
4. A trainer's grasp of mode, of procedure, is every bit as important as her confidence in dealing with content.
5. A trainer should not be over-prepared.
6. A trainer should have an M.A. in Applied Linguistics so as to be able to cope with theory at a relatively high level of conceptual complexity.
7. A trainer needs to be able to perform certain basic training routines automatically, so as to leave his mind free to be creative in other areas.
8. Any training course in FLT, regardless of degree of experience of trainees, of whether trainees are NS or NNS, of whether the course is pre-service or in-service, of whether it is exam-oriented or not, will have the same common core, part of which will be a language component.
9. A trainer must be able to deal confidently with all aspects of grammar, lexis and phonology.
10. A trainer learns as much as her trainees during a session: a session will often allow her to sort her ideas out.
11. A danger of any session is that it will become above all a vehicle for the trainer to show off his knowledge.
12. A trainer's chief job is to enable trainees to make wisely informed choices, independent of him/her.
13. Assessment and evaluation of learning goes on constantly in the FL classroom, but it rarely surfaces in the teacher training arena, outside teaching practice.
14. No training course is worth attending unless it contains a practical component, ideally full-scale teaching practice, but failing that, micro-teaching or peer teaching.
15. We should be talking about teacher education, not teacher training.

After lunch we were crammed into a smaller room, but since we all knew each other quite well by then, that wasn't too much of a problem. In groups we completed Worksheet B. During a lecturette, Peter gave us the statements in the first column (thus reinforcing them). Discussion in pairs brought up interesting points on teaching students as well as training teachers and the similarities and differences.

WORKSHEET B

MANAGING LEARNING

	MODE	INSTRUCTIONS
Part 1	Lecture	Fill in Column A of worksheet
Part 2	Pair discussion	In pairs, complete columns B and C. You don't have to agree.
Part 3	Discussion in fours	In fours, compare completed worksheets and adjust or add if necessary. Then think of a sixth statement of a similar kind and fill in Columns A, B and C in Row 6.
Part 4	Plenary	Each four's spokesperson to give the whole group its new statement, its implications and comments: examples.
Part 5	Silent reflection	Think about and get ready to talk about the way in which the session you have just taken part in was organised. Two questions for reflection:

a) How much can a trainer get across to trainees through a 'hidden curriculum'?

b) Should it be made explicit?

We then had a feedback on the 'warmer' brainstorming at the beginning of the day and on the 'how' of the day.

One group said that talking about expectations of a course was a good opener. Someone said that without some sort of 'warmer' there was a noticeable difference in the way a group worked. The importance of 'contracts' was cited (i.e. everybody agreeing on the programme, timetabling etc. at the start of a course/session). Peter cited the typical I.H. opener, at the start of a four-week RSA Prep. course, of a first lesson in a foreign language. Other people referred to zodiac

groupings, or use of countries, colours etc. to get people into sub-groups, or designing a personal coat-of-arms on an OHP transparency and using it to present oneself etc.

We all agreed on the importance of the first session of a course.

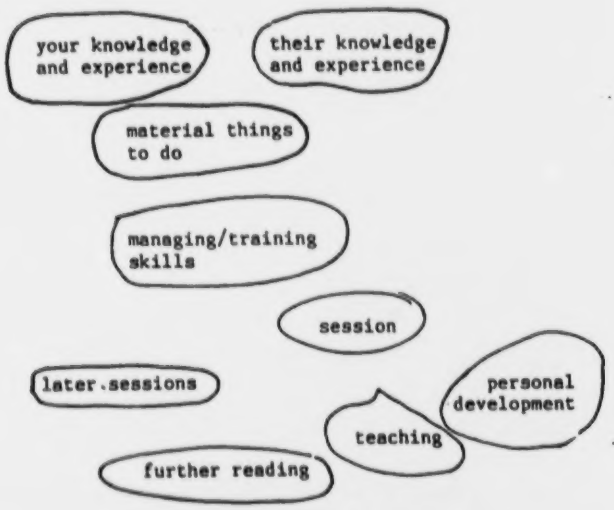
After a period of silent reflection, Peter invited comments on the day. The first session was criticised, but constructively, as we decided on the next day's programme together. Most people wanted a little more 'meat' (Peter had already introduced the idea of a 'menu'

from which learners, teachers etc., could take their pick, according to their individual styles, rather than a 'fixed meal').

THE SECOND DAY - SATURDAY

Most people turned up, despite the temptations of sleeping in, but we were all rather quiet and Peter was happy to give us some input. He spoke about the importance of the experiential aspect of these seminars and training sessions. Also important is the reflective aspect, and the fact that people have different preferences and individual strategies.

He used an OHP to show various areas of input and output. This is my copy of it;(his was beautifully done with different colours etc.) but he stressed that it was his model and that we might ourselves design others that suited us better.



Individual diagrams may vary - not everyone is 'visual'.

We then looked at a list (the result of a brain-storming session with a group of trainees) of the different roles a trainer or teacher may play (psychiatrist, mother/father, rubbish bin etc.). I suppose this meant we have to be adaptable and sensitive!

Next came 'cross-themes' - you can use sessions to implement more than one technique/style. See grid below.

session topics	classroom management	correction techniques	learning theories	phonological features
presenting new language	✓	✓	✓	
controlled practice		✓	✓	✓
fluency practice				
teaching vocabulary				
exploiting dialogues				
information gap activities				

NB. The ticks are only examples. We suggested other cross-themes, such as cultural awareness.

The rest of the day was spent looking at a summary of an article, trying out a test, working with a flow chart, working in groups on producing our own 'opening' language awareness/sensitisation exercises for the beginning of a training course, watching a video showing a training session for novice teachers where after observation feedback a trainee presented a new idea, discussing the usefulness of training videos and various sorts of training activities.

Some of the most interesting aspects of this seminar were that process is as important as product, that silence can contribute greatly, that rhythm and pacing of work is vital and that the affective aspect of the seminar, where these principles were actually experienced meant that people came away with high energy.

▶▶

SESSION REPORT

▶ Many people hoped the British Council would run similar events in future.

SUE INKSTER

A former English Teaching Advisor with the British Council in Paris. She is currently working on correspondence courses at the British Institute there. She is also researching the history of English teaching in France, and teaching freelance.

BOB MORIN

Is currently teaching with Metropolitan Languages in Paris, where he is involved in some in-house teacher training, and has worked on children's English courses in England, and Executive courses with Pilgrims.

SINGAPORE CONFERENCE

SEAMEO Regional Language Centre in Singapore will hold its 24th Regional Seminar from 10-14 APRIL 1989 in the RELC Building, 30 Orange Grove Road, Singapore 1025.
The theme is "Language Teaching Methodology for the Nineties".

Q What is EFLTED ?
A ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT (EFLTED) GROUP

EFLTED is an informal grouping of teacher educators who are involved in the education and training of teacher trainers. The group's current activities are the organisation of seminars and the publishing of the proceedings of the seminars.

Origins of EFLTED: The First Seminar

The first seminar on the subject of EFL Teacher Educator Development arose from a proposal by Peter Strevens of the Bell Educational Trust, as a result of a colloquium held at the TESOL Convention, Anaheim, in March 1985. It was agreed that a one day seminar, sponsored jointly by Bell and the British Council, should be held at Regent's College, London on 13th February 1987. There were forty-five participants all with experience of, or a keen interest in, the field of TESOL teacher education. Participants from institutions running courses designed specifically for teacher trainers were invited to prepare a short position paper describing the work their institutions had done in EFL teacher educator development and the principles guiding such courses.

The programme of the day was divided into three main sections. The first was a plenary question and answer session, during which three panels dealt with different types of teacher training courses. The second session was a group discussion on a range of topics relating to the roles of, and type of training appropriate for, teacher trainers. The final session was also group discussions, but this time the groups chose their own topics for discussion.

At the end of the day it was decided that the proceedings, and the participants' prior and subsequent submissions should be published, that further seminars should be held on a similar theme, and that a small working party or committee should be formed to undertake the publication and to plan future events. The proceedings were published in August 1987 and were made available to participants in the first, and subsequently, the second seminar.

The Second Seminar

Peter Maingay kindly offered International House, London, as the venue for the second seminar and, after consulting prospective participants, the date of Saturday, 31 October 1987 was selected. For the second seminar it was decided to focus on case studies; with participants designing a trainer-training course in the morning and designing specific activities in the afternoon. To this end, Austin Sanders, a KELT officer in Sudan, was approached to provide material for a case study on the field tutors of the In-Service Educational Training Institute (ISETI) programme. Peter Maingay provided material for a case study of a course for a multinational group of teacher trainers, based on such a course held at International House. John Norrish and Peter Maingay worked together to produce guidelines for the afternoon's activities.

Participants in the second seminar, about thirty-six in number, received the case study materials about two weeks before the seminar and were asked to decide, before the seminar, which case study they wished to work on. Although the day was planned to consist of two sessions, the case studies took up the whole day, with the afternoon activities being, for the most part, subsumed within the case study work.

The proceedings of the second seminar consists mainly of the reports of the groups' work on

the case studies. There is also a report on the plenary session, and the results of the post-seminar questionnaire, sent to participants on the first and second seminars and a few other people.

The Third Seminar

The third EFLTED seminar was held on 4 and 11 November 1988 at Regent's College, London. Applications for attending the seminar were such that it would have been impossible to cater for everyone on one day. Thus the seminar, with the same content but different participants, was held on two successive Fridays. This seminar focussed on conducting post-lesson discussions with teachers. Participants were given a pre-seminar reading and reflection task which formed the basis of the first discussion activity of the day. This was followed by a group role play activity based on videos of lessons. The afternoon began with a plenary session led by Mike Weller, of Bulmershe College of Education, on approaches to post-lesson discussion. The final activity was group preparation of guidelines for conducting post-lesson discussions.

Further Information

The EFLTED group has no formal constitution or membership fee. The mailing list of people who have either attended a seminar or expressed interest in the group's activities numbers about 120. Most of these are in Britain, from private language schools, colleges, and universities. About 20% are from overseas, the majority in Europe, but including teacher trainers from Africa, Asia and Australia. The following people are currently serving on the Steering Committee of EFLTED:

Jim Kerr, Freelance, London.
Peter Maingay, The Bell School, Norwich.
John Norrish, Institute of Education, University of London.
Jon Roberts, University of Reading.
Richard Rossner, Bell Language Institute, London.
Gordon Slaven, British Council, London.
Edward Woods, University of Lancaster.

If you would like copies of the proceedings of the seminars, or would like to be added to the mailing list and given details of future seminars, please write to:

Gordon Slaven,
English Language Management Department (Overseas),
The British Council,
10 Spring Gardens,
London SW1A 2BL.

Process Options Series : Idea 10

This series aims to help trainers to find alternatives to trainer talk in input sessions. It's not that there is anything wrong with a straight forward lecture but most trainers seem glad to add to their repertoire of input techniques. The idea this issue is then, "The Backwards Lecture".

The steps are these:

1. Write out clear, skeleton notes for your talk and make these available to all participants using photocopier, OHP or blackboard.

2. In groups, participants discuss your notes, filling them out and "guessing" what the talk is about. If the notes are in clear sections, different groups can be responsible for different parts of the lecture.

3. One person is chosen to represent each group. This person gives part of the lecture. It is up to each of the representatives to introduce, recap or conclude just as a lecturer would.

4. At the end, (or after each group section if you prefer), anyone can ask for clarification, or extra information. The person who wrote the notes can comment too on anything that was left out or misinterpreted.

The advantages of this idea are that participants have to think hard and listen to each other and that different voices are heard throughout the "lecture". The lecturer can tell how much has been understood and can iron out any misunderstandings. The participants go home with skeleton notes which have been usefully annotated. These notes form a useful record of the work and are less likely to be misunderstood at home. Thanks to Roger Bowers for reminding me of this technique and giving it a good name.

The Editor.

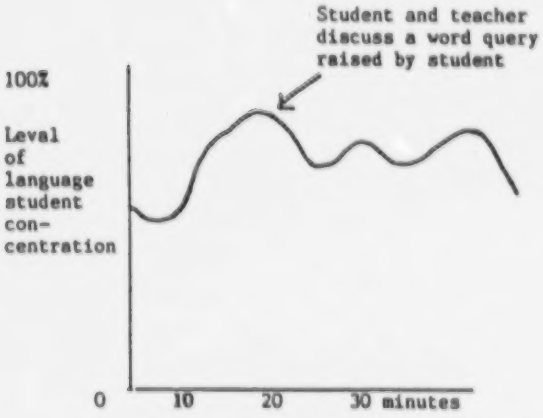
Observation and Feedback

Observation Tasks for Pre-Service Trainees

On the courses I work on in the winter, pre-service trainees are required to observe at least one and a half hours of live teaching for four weeks. Since they often have very little experience, there is a problem at the start of the month of their not really knowing what they are seeing. Trainees often state at the end of an observation period that the lesson was "interesting" or that "the teacher made it look really easy" or "the students were a bit sleepy". If pressed to say more, they have real difficulty doing so. Things improve during the month but by the last week fatigue sets in and, especially when watching peers working with small teaching practice classes, trainees find it very difficult to concentrate fully.

Here are some tasks I suggest they tackle while observing, to help their concentration and analysis of what's happening. The tasks are not in order of importance.

1. Observers can be asked to plot a "student concentration graph". they choose a different language student each and sit where they can see and hear their student easily (and not too obviously!)



Length of teaching slot

On the peaks and troughs of language student concentration the observers write notes (on what was happening at the time) that might explain the degree of concentration (see the graph above).

2. Observers look at the activities planned for the observed lesson. They try to predict in detail what vocabulary, tenses, functional phrases etc. are likely to come up in language student talk. These items can be written down the left hand side of a piece of paper. During the observation, the observers can tick off which items are actually used by students. Other observers can note down what language comes up that had not been predicted.

3. An observer can get close enough to a student to be able to hear the student easily. Using a piece of paper divided thus:

Name of language student	
Correct Utterances	Incorrect Utterances

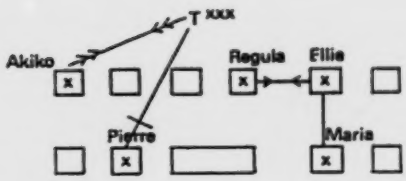
or thus:

Name of language student	
Meaningful language (i.e. real communication)	Meaningless language (e.g. mechanical repetition)

the observer can make verbatim notes on the language students' production.

4. Observers can note down phrases used by the teacher in any particular area of classroom management language e.g. praise, ending an activity, closing a lesson, correcting. This will later help the teacher to know if her/his repertoire is broad or narrow in the particular functional area.

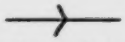
5. Observers can complete interaction diagrams. First a seating plan is drawn and names of the language students added if possible (in case students move around during the lesson). e.g.



Lines are drawn between people who speak to each other. Distinctions can be made between different types of interaction. It is as well for observers to concentrate on marking in <u>one</u> type of interaction to start with. Once they have got the hang of the idea they can work on more than one interaction type at a time.

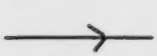
Different types of interaction are plotted onto the diagram above e.g.

a) Teacher asks a question and <u>nominates</u> a student to answer.

 (see T to Akiko)

b) Teacher asks a question to the whole class e.g. "Does anyone know ...?" This is marked with an "X" by "T".

c) A student responds to a teacher initiated exchange.

 (see Akiko to T)

d) A student volunteers a remark without being prompted by the teacher.

(see Pierre to T)

e) Students work in pairs when directed.

(See Regula and Ellie)

f) Students interact without teacher's prompting.

_____ (see Ellie and Maria)

Other symbols can be evolved to mark in whatever is considered of significance e.g. the number of Yes/No to Open questions, lack of individual response during choral drill.

6. Observers time various stages of an observed lesson and compare these times with those estimated by the teacher and written on the lesson plan. They try to work out why the timings might be different.

7. Observers watch the teacher's eye contact with individual language students to establish which students get most eye contact and where the teacher's "blind spot" is.

8. If the trainees have been taught certain steps of say a "skills" lesson or a "presentation and practice" lesson then these steps can be written down and kept on the desk by the observer during the observed lesson. As the lesson progresses the observer can tick off which stages occur (i.e. what is recognisable as something the trainee has learnt to do) and can note down new stages that are not on the trainees', often rather limited, model steps.

(Thanks to Mike Harding for this idea.).

These are just some of the tasks I offer to observers. Once a bank of trainee observation tasks has been built up, observers can choose which ones they want to do. Observers can do different tasks from each other. The teacher can be asked which task would be most useful to their own development and observers can do that one. The results of the different tasks can be discussed and shown during the feedback so taking the heat off the observed teacher and the trainer and allowing for more discussion and exchange in the feedback session.

The Editor.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE A TRAINING COURSE ?

by Jordi Roca

I would like to share with you, well ... mostly with the inexperienced teacher trainers, some of the questions that arose in my mind when faced for the first time with the wide question: "Would you like to give a training course to a small group of teachers?" I would like to raise some questions. However, I do not intend here to provide them with suitable answers. This is something you will have to do but, just raising them may help you to frame or tailor your first training course.

Question One. Should I dare to give a training course?

A teacher may feel safe in front of a young class granted that their language level is much higher than that of the students. How insecure a trainer may feel in front of their first training group! Yet something good happened to me when I felt that kind of insecurity that makes you revise your work, like actors do, before going on stage. Insecurity makes you think and review.

Question Two. Should I use the trainee's mother tongue or English?

I had thought of the possibility that some of the trainees managed better in English than I did. But I put it plainly from the very beginning that it was not a language course. The focus was to be on meaning and discussion so everything was done in the target language.

Question Three. Would they accept me as their trainer?

At first signt it may seem a stupid question... something that only trainers who lack experience and self-confidence would wonder. Well, I did wonder. But surely all teachers should be open to this feeling too?

Question Four. Should I deal with theory or practice?

Thinking about the course content, the words theory and practice started floating in my mind. What did I mean by practice? Should it be the execution of carefully prepared lesson plans to real classes? As real students were not available, could we do peer teaching? Or should we practice some activities and then have a group discussion? What did I mean by theory? Developing language learning principles? Or would it be enough to give a few handouts highlighting the aspects that the practical teaching threw up?

Trying to balance theory and practice, two things seemed to be clear in my mind. First, I did not want just to give an endless list of activities I had tried out many times, successfully, in classes. (I did find out later on however that teachers were avid for practical ideas). Secondly, information about theory and the latest methodological trends had to be fed in somehow, somewhere.

Question Five. What general aims should the course have?

With, say, eight hours of course time available, it would be fair to focus on, say, one of the four major skills or on the use of teaching resources rather than trying to deal with too many aspects of learning and teaching.

On the other hand, to what extent was I responsible for evoking or reinforcing the trainees' love of teaching? How often should I refer them to a bibliography of inspiring books? Should I mention Frank Smith's "Reading" (i) or summarise some of its main points or forget the book as it is not a book with practical ideas ready to be used in class? Should I go into detail about Earl Stevick's "Images and options" (ii) or is the book too dense for inexperienced teachers? How could I balance the disadvantage of the density of these books with the advantage of sharing with the trainees the options they contain?

Question Six. How much should I demand from the trainees?

Only an authoritarian trainer can force a demand on trainees. Being demanding is balanced by what the trainees can offer and will depend on such factors as motivation, attitude and aptitude. You can demand but a demand may not be felt or answered!

(i) "Reading". Frank Smith. CUP 1978
(ii) "Images and Options in the Language Classroom". E. Stevick. CUP 1986.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of particular relevance or interest to teacher trainers are:

Tutors Self-Monitoring Inventory, a staff development aid from the Youth Education Service, 14 Frederick Place, Bristol BS8 1AS, England. A list of 33 suggestions of what to monitor your teaching for. Items include "Allowing myself time to talk to students" and "Being firm without shouting"! Users are advised to pick one or two areas from the list to work on and to add other areas of interest in the spaces provided. 4 pages.

The CORT Thinking Program by Edward de Bono. Pergamon Press (1986). 60 lessons designed to teach thinking as a skill are divided into 10 lesson sets with names like "Breadth", "Organization", "Creativity". Can be used over a 2 year period with ages from 6 years to adult. Could be used as a 'content' subject for training or adult education courses. Consists of Teachers' Notes and Student Workcards. Written for native English speakers.

Explorations in Language by A.J. Tinkel. C.U.P. (1988). For native English speakers taking basic linguistics at G.C.E. 'A' level. Written by a practising teacher and adopting an exploratory approach, it aims to raise to conscious awareness the tacit mastery of language. Thus could be used on pre- and in-service courses for native English speaker teachers. Full of useful, short tasks.

Trends in Language Programme Evaluation Papers presented at Chulalongkorn University Language Institute's 1st International Conference 1986 Bangkok. Huge pink plastic tome containing 29 detailed papers given by local and international experts and divided into 3 sections: Approaches to Evaluation, Programme Design, Uses of Quantitative and Qualitative measures. Available from CULI, Prem Purachatra Building, Phyathai Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand.

It used to be said that vocabulary was the "Cinderella of EFL". Judging by the sudden rush of books on writing, this must have been the other Cinderella!

Teaching Writing Skills by Donn Byrne. Longman (1988). New edition. Aims to show how different kinds of writing activity can be built into a coherent programme. Contains material on copying, children's writing, teaching script, communicative tasks, integrated skills, and correction.

Writing by Tricia Hedge. OUP (1988). A collection of some 60 recipes for writing activities marked for level and attempting to break away from the model-based, analysis of finished text approach toward a more process-based approach to composing and writing for others. Section Titles for the activities are: Composing, Communicating, Crafting, Improving, Evaluating.

Class Readers by Jean Greenwood. OUP (1988). A comprehensive collection of activities to exploit class readers for language, perception and literary work. Section headings are: Pre-reading, While reading, After reading, Changing Frame, Scheme of work. The 4th Section is particularly interesting and could form the basis of a new book! Original.

Academic Writing: Process and Product ELT Documents 129. M.E.P. (1988). Set of papers from 1988 Selmous conference. Chief focus is on non-native speaker students in tertiary education facing examinations, continuous assessment, or projects. An interesting final paper on how overwriting can lead to success in academic articles!

ELT Textbooks and Materials: Problems in Evaluation and Development. ELT Documents: 126. (M.E.P. 1988). A collection of papers considering teaching materials from the points of view of reviewers, writers, publishers, and directors of studies. Evaluation check lists included.

Syllabus Design by David Nunan. OUP (1988). Aims to provide teachers with techniques for analysing and criticising the syllabuses they are working with and to provide concepts and procedures for teachers able to develop their own syllabuses. Product-oriented, Analytic, Synthetic, Grammatical, Functional-material, Process-oriented, Procedural, Task-based and Content syllabuses and the natural approach are touched on, each with a paragraph or two of input and many task questions. No answers or solutions are given to the 146 tasks in the book for readers to check against.

Listening by A. Anderson and T. Lynch. OUP (1988). Organised in the same way as all the titlesso far in this series called "A Scheme for Teacher Education" i.e. a combination of small amounts of text interspersed with sequences of tasks for the reader. Main text divisions are: What is listening comprehension? Graded development of listening skills in foreign learners, listening materials and tasks.

ERRATUM

In the last issue on this page we stated that the Applied Linguistics and Language Study Series was published by Heinemann. It is of course published by Longman.

Apologies for the confusion!

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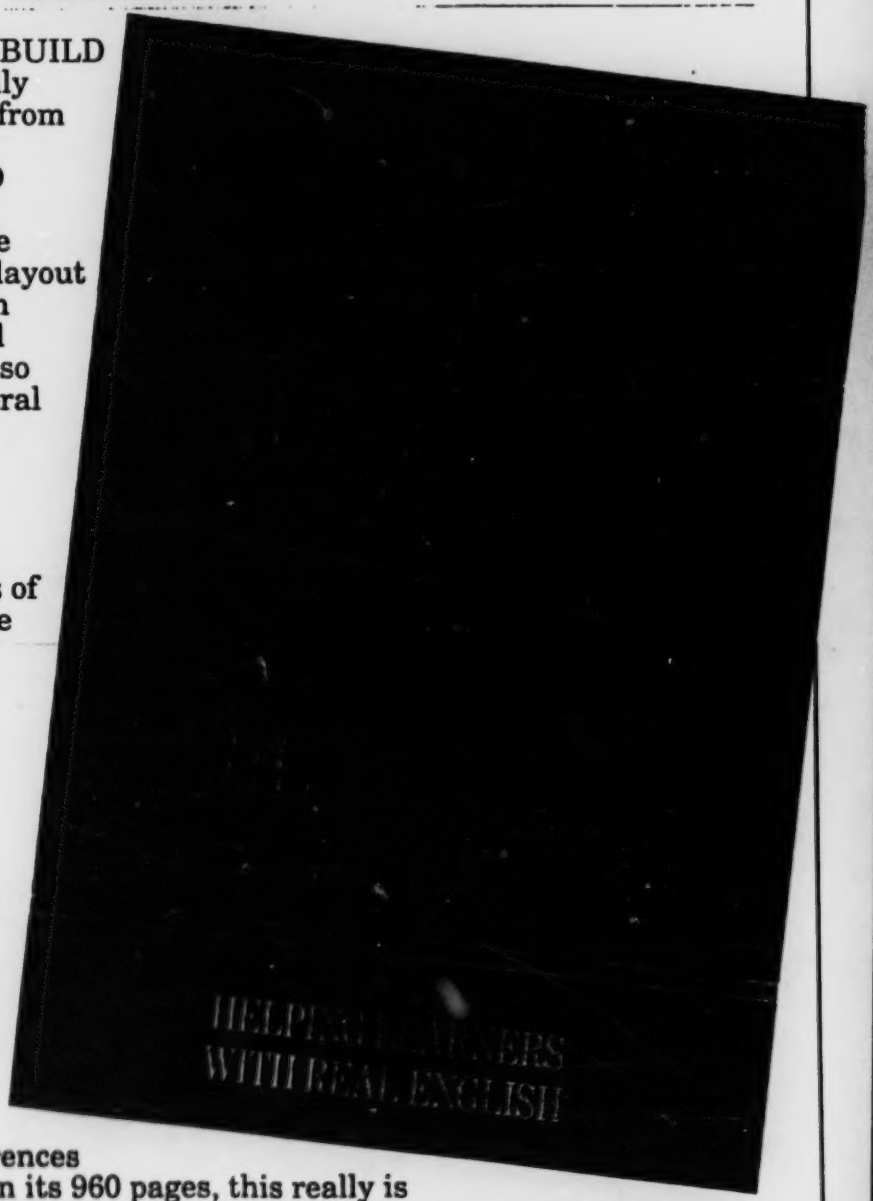

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✓ I dialled the wrong number by mistake.
by mistake but **in error**
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pass 1 × We were glad to hear that you had passed in your examination.
✓ We were glad to hear that you had passed your examination.
pass an examination without **in**

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume three Number two

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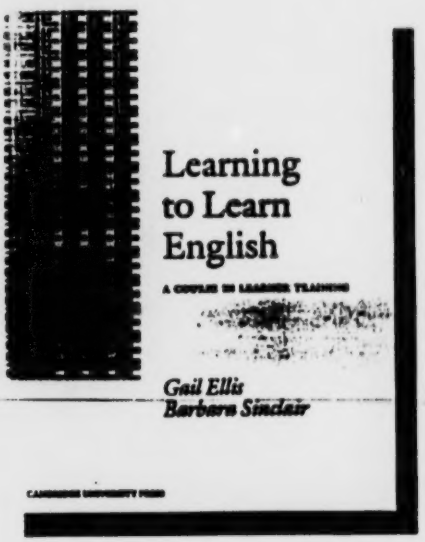

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This collection explores the implications of the recent movement towards autonomy in language learning with papers that explore both theory and practice. Specific issues discussed include learner training, institutional organisation, self-assessment, and a number of basic theoretical issues. Contributions include Philip Riley, Dick Allwright and Leslie Dickinson, together with many other practising teachers. 333 48726 5

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

VOLUME THREE NUMBER TWO SUMMER 1989

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EDITOR: Tessa Woodward

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EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the biggest issue ever of 32 pages!

Several readers have written to ask for the occasional major, in-depth piece and this issue contains the first of these. Peter Grundy of the School of English, The University of Durham, has written a substantial and provocative two part critique of the type of pre-service teacher training course based on the widely-accepted presentation, practice, production model. Part One of the critique starts off this issue.

Rod Bolitho's article in Volume 2, No. 3, continues to provoke comment. Marion Williams of the University of Exeter, School of Education, moves the debate on with her article on some possible basic principles for running developmental post graduate courses.

'The Teacher Trainer' regularly runs series on different themes. Not all the themes appear in each issue. In this issue we welcome back the following series:

Author's Corner We are delighted to welcome John Fanselow of the Teachers' College, Columbia University, to this issue to share with us some of the background to his recent book on classroom analysis, "Breaking Rules".

Interviews Roger Bowers of The British Council looks back over his career so far and provides a useful framework (with mnemonics) for the inexperienced teacher trainer.

Process Options Our most regular column deals, this time, with a method of listing, selecting and discussing content. This contribution is from Natalie Hess, at present living in the USA.

Observation and Feedback Another very popular series, analyses the language that often comes up in post lesson discussion and suggests that it's unhelpful! An alternative options framework is offered.

Training Around the World is back with a view from China given by Bruce Morrison who was working there until 1988.

In order to balance the long in-depth piece and the established series in this issue, we have included plenty of shorter pieces:

- If you've ever heard of Rudolf Steiner and Steiner Schools, and wanted to know more, then John Thomson's article will interest you.
- If you enjoyed Gerry Kenny's article in Issue Zero then Ruth Wajnryb's follow-up, "Self access teacher training", might well appeal.
- The work of NALA, The National Association of Language Advisors, is the content of Phillip Dahl's article and is presented via the voices of 3 "interviewees".
- Sue Leather escapes from her school for a day and writes about the experience in 'Training - inside and outside your own school'.
- Teacher development in Poland is Roger Woodham's concern. Until recently, English Language Officer there, Roger is now back with the British Council in London.
- For those who like "having a think" after a full day or full week, the "Mapping the Day" article might help with the process of consolidation and distillation.

A very full issue this time then. I hope you enjoy it!

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staff-room, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal will come out three times a year and will make use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

GONE TO TEACHERS EVERY ONE - a critique of accepted pre-service teacher training by Peter Grundy (Part 1)

'Language is a particular embarrassment to the teacher, because outside school, children seem to learn language without any difficulty, whereas in school with the aid of teachers their progress is halting and unsatisfactory.' 1

When Mr. Wrong decided to become a language teacher, he didn't have any trouble finding a training course.

That taught him to do all the WRONG things.

I bet you can't guess why!

Can you?

Yes, all the training courses were like that, all completely, absolutely WRONG. And for once Mr. Wrong found everyone else was doing the same thing as he was, the same completely, absolutely, utterly, WRONG THING!

If I could draw like Roger Hargreaves, you can probably guess what I'd draw you now: Mr. Wrong standing in front of a class of would-be learners, playing them a model dialogue from a cassette recorder and looking anxiously through a set of notes for the first controlled practice drill.

In this first of two articles, I set out to describe mainstream language teaching and Royal Society of Arts-type teacher training procedures from a hostile perspective. It may be a slightly academic or theoretical paper in places. In the second, much more practical article (to be published in the next edition of The Teacher Trainer), I make suggestions for a more appropriate teacher training programme. If, therefore, this first article argues that we shouldn't think of teacher training as Presentation - Controlled Practice - Free Practice, the second article will ask how else we are to think of it, and consider the implications for 'pre-service training in EFL teaching'. 2

-0-

Let's start with a quotation from the Old Testament:

The ability to select language items appropriate to students' needs and level, to divide the items into learnable units, to present the language clearly and efficiently to students, to devise and operate appropriate activities for the controlled and free practice of the language presented and to check learning and understanding at all stages of the process. 3

This is one of the RSA's declared course objectives for the Certificate.

The attractions

As an account of what to work on before and during a language lesson, this is obviously highly attractive to teacher trainers. It divides teacher training into a number of areas: materials selection, lesson planning, presentation, controlled and free practice, reinforcement, checking and assessment. Each of these areas is easily teachable as a discrete element to be integrated in due course into a single procedure. Give each of these areas a morning's attention, and even Mr. Wrong can walk into a classroom (particularly if the class is a small one) and go through the motions adequately.

It's easy to see how the view of language teaching implied in the RSA course objectives might be much more suited to training would-be teachers in learnable routines than to enabling would-be learners to acquire a second language. And in fact, this is quite often acknowledged by teacher trainers, who say things like, 'OK, well it may not be the best way to teach language, but it does work as a teacher training technique. And once teachers have learnt this way, they can always learn to do it another way later.

You will recognise here the unmistakable voice of Mr. Wrong's friend, Mr. Topsy Turvy (or TT for short).

The problems

This is clearly a subject-centred approach to teaching and not a learner-centered one. Moreover, it treats language as an out-there knowledge-field which can be divided into discrete units and graded for difficulty: this is neither a respectable nor an informed view of the nature of language. It also assumes that language learning occurs as the result of the presentation of a model that is subsequently practised: that maximally effective language learning occurs under these conditions must be a very doubtful assumption.

I think it's worth spending a little time wondering about how these rather silly ideas have come to be so widely accepted by teachers and so generally reflected in coursebooks and teacher training routines.

Language teaching and education

Don't worry, I don't know anything about the big 'E' either. But you can see why it's relevant to introduce it into this discussion: it's Education that's decided that a 'year' is 40 weeks, a 'week' is 5 days and an 'hour' is 40 minutes. The 'learnable units' into which language is (to be) divided are in fact the (sets of) units of instruction which every coursebook implies. These units are language measured in 'hours', 'weeks', even sometimes 'years' - they exist not in the language, but as an educational or institutional construct.

But, you'll be saying, he's already admitted that he knows nothing about Education. Doesn't he know about all those controlled experiments in educational psychology that validate the Presentation - Practice - Production model (the 3P's) favoured in educational institutions? How it's been conclusively demonstrated that

recognition and imitation of a model are critical for effective learning? Doesn't educational psychology tell us what a perfect lesson should look like and hasn't the RSA based its notion of a syllabus on this research?

Well, I'm sorry to tell you that my fairly careful search through the resources of two university libraries and my consultations with School of Education colleagues have failed - so far - to unearth this crucial research justification for the way we teach. Maybe Mr. Impossible could do better, but I haven't been able to find any principled justification in the psychology literature for the way we do things. In other words, I suspect we teach what we do, how we do, intuitively, and that our views of what a lesson ought to look like are based on folklore rather than hard knowledge.

But Education isn't only concerned with language teaching. A theory of instruction ought perhaps to operate across a wider curriculum and to draw on many disciplines in addition to psychology.

Nearly twenty years ago now, Bruner wrote

> One is struck by the absence of a theory of instruction or a guide to pedagogy - a prescriptive theory on how to proceed in order to achieve various results, a theory that is neutral with respect to ends but exhaustive with respect to means. It is interesting that there is a lack of an integrating theory in pedagogy, that in its place there is principally a body of maxims. 4

Bruner's theory of instruction was an attempt to remedy this lack. It's a theory that seems to me to underlie almost all pedagogic practice. For convenience, it may be boiled down to four central notions, which Bruner terms

Predisposition
Structure of knowledge
Sequencing
Reinforcement.

In Mathematics (the subject in relation to which Bruner discusses his theory of instruction), it may be the case for all I know that this view of subject-as-knowledge makes sense, and that one could teach Mathematics successfully in terms of these four notions. But in order to structure a language lesson according to this theory, the teacher is obliged to think first of the subject of study (i.e., language), rather than first of the learner, and to treat this subject-matter not as behaviour (which we all know language use truly to be), but, at least in the early stages of learning, as structured, sequence-able knowledge. 'The structure of a domain of knowledge' (I quote Bruner's exact words) seems curiously inappropriate to language, as we debate what syllabus, if any, language teachers should work with.

In addition, a by no means trivial problem with any theory of instruction is that it

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quickly assumes an identity of its own, and unsuccessful learners are held to demonstrate their inadequacy rather than the theory's. Institutionalised education is centripedal on failure, that is, it's ultimately designed to ensure that of every 20,000 of us who start the process, only one will succeed in becoming a professor. Therefore a theory of instruction that acknowledges Predispositions (or 'aptitude' as language teachers tend to call it) is in a sense paradoxical, since ideally we should be looking for a theory of instruction which enables us all to be successful. Since anyone suitably motivated can learn a language, the notion of ability implicit in Predispositions is especially inappropriate to our field.

The notion of Structure of knowledge also implies a teacher-pupil relation, or as Bruner puts it, 'a relation between one who possesses something and one who does not'. As far as language teaching is concerned, this seems to obscure the fact that the gap between what the speaker of a language and the would-be learner of it knows is relatively trivial, that the would-be learner already knows a very great deal, and that in any case it's the learner who generates the syllabus and must fill that gap (as everyone should know by now), and not the teacher.

Moreover, it's precisely when it occurs to us that the relation is 'between one who possesses something and one who does not' that we create a hierarchical situation and bring into existence a set of institutional structures. And it's precisely then that real language learning ceases to occur, and instead the classroom is taken over by those stunted parodies of true bilingual performance that we all recognise so well.

I apologise for the heaviness of this section, but the point I'm trying to make is that it's possible that what happens in educational institutions is fine for everything except language learning. Most people would agree that in schools in the UK, only a tiny minority benefit much from their encounter with institutionalised language teaching. It could be that the dominant theory of instruction as reflected in syllabuses like that suggested for teacher training by the RSA is entirely counter-productive.

LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LANGUAGE

In The Language Teaching Controversy, a book which tries to relate language teaching methodology and theories of language (and which no language teacher should be without), Karl Diller states

> We have two major traditions of language teaching, based on two different views of language and language acquisition. Decisions on language teaching methodology .. have been decisions based .. on differing theories of language. 5

Empiricist and rationalist views

These two views of language are, of course, the so-called empiricist view of the North American Structuralists, in which, as Twadell states, 'the rule is a mere summary of the habit' 6 ('the habit' being, presumably, observed language data), and the so-called rationalist view of the Chomskyans and the Port Royal thinkers of the seventeenth century where, as Diller puts it, 'to know a language is to be able to create new sentences in that language'.

In other words, you can take an empiricist or out-there view of language, deciding that it's an observable and hence describable phenomenon. Or you can take a rationalist or in-the-head view, deciding that language is a mental ability, and that the observable data is of less significance in itself than the underlying system or set of mental abilities of which it is an indicator. It's therefore a more generalized internal grammar that enables us to generate sentences, and since, as Miller notices,

> It would take one thousand times the estimated age of the earth to utter all the admissible twenty word sentences of English 7,

a model-offering approach seems pretty futile.

Diller's argument is that the out-there people have tended to teach it one way and the in-the-head people another. Thus he equates empiricist views of language with model-offering, behaviouristic teaching methodologies (particularly audio-lingualism), and rationalist views of language with the earlier Direct Methods of Berlitz and his contemporaries in the latter part of the last century.

It follows from this that our choice of methodology ought to be determined by our knowledge of the nature of language as well as by our knowledge of how second languages are learnt. For the former, we need to study theoretical linguistics, and for the latter applied linguistics.

We don't need to study much theoretical linguistics to know that in modern times the empiricist view of language has had to give way to the rationalist for reasons that are irresistible. It's therefore appropriate to ask to what extent language teaching methodology has abandoned audio-lingualism in favour of a more appropriate alternative? It may help to review briefly (and no doubt controversially) the development of mainstream language teaching methodology in recent times and to try to see where we're at now.

Elsewhere 8, I've argued in some detail that in reality language teachers haven't switched from one methodology to another in the decisive way that Diller's polarisation of opposites suggests. In fact all methodologies are essentially constrained by the nature of institutionalised language teaching and exhibit

only minor, although often ideologically violent, reactions against the immediately preceding paradigm. Thus early Direct Method retained and even elaborated on the notion of a language graded for difficulty, which had been a cardinal principle of Grammar/Translation, but reacted violently against the mother tongue as a medium of instruction and against talk about rather than talk in the target language. And in one sense, it could be argued that audio-lingualism, and its French cousin the audio-visual method, were in the direct method tradition of Berlitz and others, and not, as Diller claims, in an altogether different tradition.

Audio-lingualism, as is well known, separated and sequenced the four skills, so that in its heyday each ten minutes of listening was followed by ten of speaking, and each ten minutes of speaking by ten of reading, and each ten minutes of reading by ten of writing. The strict sequencing of material that was such a hallmark of Berlitz's work inevitably led to a teaching methodology in which error was at all costs to be avoided, since one couldn't progress to the next stage in the graded sequence of materials until there was error free performance in the preceding stage. Thus pattern drills, transformation exercises, substitution tables where the learner couldn't go wrong, and in particular, imitation of target language norms, naturally became the standard classroom practices of audio-lingualism.

By this time, say 1970 in UK, most teachers of English as a foreign language had grasped that the word 'Chomsky' meant that what was then going on in their classrooms was 'a bad thing', and were generally happy to adandon audio-lingualism in its strictest form. But rather than reflect Chomsky's rationalist position, language teachers turned instead to Del Hymes's work on 'the rules of use' 9, and substituted the Notional Syllabus for the structured-based teaching of the preceding model. Again, we see a continuing tradition in the subject-centred view of language teaching and in the idea of the 'cycle' of difficulty that was so important a concept in Wilkins's work; and again we see a violent reaction, this time against the way in which the subject-matter of the syllabus is arranged, with functions that cut clear across the former sacrosanct boundaries between one structure and another, now being seen as criterial.

It's my belief that Diller's assertion that there is an empiricist and a rationalist language teaching tradition is actually easier to demonstrate today than it was in 1971 when Generative Grammar, Structural Linguistics and Language Teaching 10, the forerunner of The Language Teaching Controversy, first appeared.

The Notional Syllabus as currently interpreted has in many ways led to the most behaviouristic teaching practices we have yet seen. The inordinate stress placed on the target language's surface structure phonology has led us to hold that the right learner response is a repetition of the original model-like stimulus. If the characteristic features of a behaviouristic lesson are

Recognition-Imitation-repetition-Variation-Selection

(as they are for Diller), is not this learning sequence (a) remarkably in tune with Bruner's theory of instruction, (b) an ideal description of the way in which so many contemporary published materials seem to expect the functional lesson to progress, and (c) what the teacher trainers would have us believe we should be training our students to do:
And yet at the same time, in the so-called 'humanistic' methodologies whose cause has been so advanced by Earl Stevick, there is a strong and detectable move towards a more rationalist position. Perhaps the current interest in humanistic methodologies also indicates a deep boredom with all those end-less functional/notional syllabuses, the dwarf Van Ek's that the language teaching sections of bookshops would foist on us, as well as out of a recognition of the ludicrous nature of the models of language we are for ever encouraged to offer our learners.

Bruner	Diller	Streamline 11	TPH 12	RSA
Predispositions				
Structure of knowledge	Recognition	Presenting	Presenting language	Presentation
Sequencing	Imitation - repetition	Providing practice	Controlled practice	Controlled practice
Reinforcement	Variation - selection	Extending/ encouraging application	Checking	Free practice

Critique cont'd

So when people talk of Communicative Language Teaching, they may be thinking of materials and techniques that reflect either of Diller's two traditions: they may be considering learning as either 'a process of mimicry and analogy or a process of rule governed creativity' 13.

If they are in the mimicry/analogy school, they will make use of a graded sequence of models of language for imitation, repetition, and especially today, variation (e.g., how would this dialogue be restructured/role play need to be different, if the context were altered); and if they belong to the rule governed creativity school, they have probably gone at least half way down the road to abandoning the syllabus and turning instead to the learner and the processes by which (s)he learns.

Unfortunately, not all language teachers think carefully enough about the irreconcilable nature of these two positions, and all too often find themselves working with a contradictory amalgam.

If teacher trainers favour a methodology based on empiricist views of language, it's not only because it's easier to work with on training courses, as I suggested earlier: it's also the dominant methodology of our time, despite the fact that it rests on an untenable view of the nature of language.

Two coursebooks

By way of illustration, it may be instructuve to look at a coursebook.

Arguably the most succesful/popular contemporary (or near contemporary) coursebook aimed at adult learners of English is Streamline English 14. It seems to me reasonably representative of so-called 'communicative' courses.

Whilst the first students' book, Departures contains no introduction of any kind, no offer to share a methodology with learners (all right - it is a beginners' book), the teachers' edition has a brief introduction of extreme interest to our case.

The authors state that the course

> aims to lead the student towards communicative competence in English by (1) presenting the target language in interesting contexts, (2) providing manipulative practice of the language, (3) extending the language into real communicative functions insofar as the classroom situation will allow, (4) encouraging creative application of the newly-acquired language.

'In selecting and grading the language to be taught', the writers have taken account of

> (1) complexity
> (2) frequency
> (3) general usefulness
> (4) immediate usefulness.

Streamline English teaches 'the four skills'. In the section on Listening, we are told that 'the teacher .. will provide the most important model on which the student will base his/her own language behaviour'. The Speaking activities consist of 'repetition of model utterances', 'manipulative drills', 'controlled practice' ('These activities are designed to enable the student to use the newly-acquired language in situations which minimize the possibility of error'), and 'transfer' - the final stage - in which

> Whenever possible the student is encouraged to use the newly-acquired language in some way meaningful to him/her. The degree of real communication that takes place is of course limited by the nature of the classroom environment.

The Reading activities consist of 'Reading from the board' and 'Reading everything that appears in the student's book'. Mr. Wrong will no doubt agree that

> Like listening, reading is a receptive skill. It would normally occur after listening and speaking in the sequence of learning a language

and that

> Reading can help to reinforce and fix in the memory what has already been heard and practised orally.

The Writing activities in Streamline English consist of 'Copying from the board', 'Exercises' ('to reinforce and consolidate what has been heard, said, and seen'), 'Guided compositions' ('The compositions in Streamline English are always controlled to the extent that the choice of structures and lexis is limited. The student works from a model letter, but is encouraged to relate it to his/her own situation'), 'Comprehension questions' and 'Dictation'. Moreover,

> Each unit has been carefully phased to provide a gradual transition from listening and repetition work through manipulative drills and controlled practice to transfer.

Such skills division, dictated only by the institutional obsession with literacy as the metric of academic failure, together with the

notion of teacher as model and the selection and grading of language, is of course pure audio-lingualism.

In the Introduction we are also told rather surprisingly that

> This approach is based on the results of recent research into language acquisition.

So whilst it may be fashionable to talk of such things as 'communicative language teaching' and 'a practical approach', a closer look at the materials often shows them to be methodologically out-dated and in fact adapted to the procedures of teaching institutions and to a dominant theory of instruction that implies 'a relation between one who possesses something and one who does not'.

A similar view of how languages are learnt is reflected in an otherwise excellent book, Gower and Walter's Teaching Practice Handbook 15. This book has been specifically written to cover 'all the major areas dealt with on the RSA Preparatory Certificate (TEFL) and other comparable courses'. A glance at the first specimen lesson plan in the chapter entitled 'Teaching Strategies' demonstrates the dominant theory of instruction at work again.

Recap' of argument so far

This article began with a quotation from John Macnamara: it's easier to learn a second language if you don't have a trained teacher. I went on to make seven claims

1. Although they may not ultimately produce teachers who enable second language learning to take place, our teacher training methods do make a training course syllabus much simpler to devise and implement than it would otherwise be.

2. Typical approaches to language teaching are subject-centred and see language learning as the acquisition of knowledge.

3. As knowledge has structure (Bruner), so we 'divide language items into learnable unit' (RSA) and offer these units as models to the learner.

4. We assume that this is how people can be taught a language, but unfortunately this assumption is largely false.

5. Viewing language as knowledge implies that language is out-there, an empirically verifiable set of habits/data.

LESSON PLAN

Learning Aims for the Students: to be able to use the past simple more fluently and have improved listening skills.

Teaching Aims: to give further practice to the past simple and develop listening skills through a taped dialogue

Time Available: 55 minutes

Stage 1
Aim: Improve listening skills (20 minutes)

Method: Lead students to comprehension of dialogue
Step 1: Set scene; relate students personally to the topic
2: Set focusing questions
3: Play tape
4: Follow up focusing questions
5: Ask further simple gist questions
6: Break up dialogue into segments
7: Ask more difficult and more detailed questions to check comprehension
etc.

Stage 2
Aim: Give controlled oral fluency practice using past simple (10 minutes)

Method: Practise pronunciation of past tenses from tape
Step 1: Stop tape before examples of past tense and try to elicit them
2: Choral repetition
3 Individual repetition
etc

Stage 3
Aim: Give semi-controlled fluency practice using past simple (10 minutes)

Method: Drill using 'infinitive' prompts Students convert into past tense
Step 1: Recap on context in dialogue
2 Choral/individual repetition of model
etc

Stage 4
Aim: Give 'freer' practice of above (15 minutes)

Method: Role-play
Step 1: Using same context, bring out characteristics of two of the characters
etc.

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(Note that I've slightly re-arranged the TPH layout so as to make more explicit the relationship between **Aims** and **Method**)

The next three sections of the chapter are labelled

> Presenting language
> Controlled practice
> and Checking.

Critique cont'd

6. Unfortunately this account of the nature of human language is also false.

7. People keep on writing coursebooks and training manuals that are based on mistaken accounts of second language acquisition and the nature of language. This is why language learners are better off without language teachers.

Follow-up article

In the follow-up article (to be published in the next edition of The Teacher Trainer), I'll be suggesting several practical alternatives to current teacher training procedures, alternatives more in line with what is known about Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and the nature of language. Meanwhile, I conclude this article with a list of 24 axioms that Mr. Wrong's trainers would have done well to consider. No doubt they won't seem axiomatic to everyone, but they are axioms nevertheless! They are the starting point for the follow-up article:

1. Encountering a sample of language should be seen as a means to an end rather than a target in itself.

2. Skill divisions (listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation, interpretation, etc.) are generally unmotivated by theories of SLA. They also limit what is possible in the classroom.

3. The learner is the only true language resource.

4. The use of authentic 'teaching materials' should be downgraded; other so-called 'teaching materials' should be dispensed with.

5. Learners should not be offered models of language to imitate.

6. The notion of a learner-generated syllabus should be respected.

7. Learners should be enabled to express their own (and not someone else's) meanings.

8. The methodology (including materials and technology) should be in the hands of the learner as at least an equal partner with the teacher.

9. Distinctions such as learner:teacher, native:non-native speaker, proficient: less proficient user of the language should be dissolved.

10. Learning should be person-related and essentially experiential.

11. Language learning is not an end in itself but part of the larger process of living - thus distinctions such as those between classroom:home, school:street are unmotivated.

12. Language learning progress should not be measured against a syllabus nor against standard language norms.

13. Language teaching should be learner driven and seek to make the learner autonomous.

14. It isn't the individual units of which a larger unit is made up that matter to meaning, but the larger units of which any particular smaller unit is a part - for Phonology, the suprasegmentals; for structure, the information structure of the discourse.

15. Only knowing what a piece of language means (or counts as doing), and nothing else, is what enables us to (learn to) use it.

16. The way anyone thinks (s)he learns must be respected, but it isn't always a reliable indication of the processes themselves.

17. No lesson should ever have an ordained structure that pre-exists its content; the starting point for every lesson is the learners.

18. Institutions should respect learning style, and not vice versa.

19. Everybody can learn a second or foreign language, but not everyone is ready or predisposed so to do.

20. Nothing should happen in a language learning classroom that isn't worth doing in its own right - the fact that it's in a foreign language should be an incidental bonus.

21. Bilinguals typically privilege one code for one context or purpose, the other for another.

22. Learning a language also involves learning to use it in conversations with people less proficient than oneself. This is especially true for an international language like English.

23. An Interlanguage (or language learner grammar) is a valid system requiring an explanatory machinery no less elegant than that required for standard varieties. there is no logical reason to regard Interlanguage as a stigmatized variety.

24. All learning involves learning about oneself, and therefore every lesson requires genuine learner investment.

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JOURNAL EXCHANGES

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A little taste of some over-the-top adspeak. Sent in by John Miles.

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Process Options Series : Idea 11

This series aims to help trainers to find different ways of conducting input sessions, different ways of interacting with content. The idea below uses a list, selection and discussion technique. The content below is teacher motivation but the list idea could be used with many different kinds of content e.g. ways of using a text in class, ways of dealing with discipline problems.

THE FLEXIBLE LIST

BY Natalie Hess

An important aspect of teacher training is the provision of opportunities for prospective teachers to analyze the sources of their own motivation in having chosen the teaching profession.

I have found "the flexible list" a useful tool in such an examination of motives.

Below is an outline of the procedure. The judicious teacher-trainer will, no doubt, make changes to suit her/his own training style.

STEP ONE "Down the Line"

Make out a list of reasons people have given for becoming teachers. (These may be logical, serious, ridiculous, sublime or any other kind). Below is a suggested list.

a. I love to explain things.
b. I like children.
c. I have a lot to say.
d. I love the English language.
e. I want to contribute.
f. Good order and cleanliness are important to me.
g. I believe in the value of education.
h. I am good with people.
i. I know how to mould a group.
j. I don't think I can do anything else.
k. I am a good actress/actor.
l. The job offers a lot of security.
m. The job gives opportunities to be creative.
o. A teacher inspired me.
p. Good discipline is important to me.
q. I feel at home in the class-room.
r. I like to be the boss.
s. The job gives a great deal of autonomy.
t. I like the people who go into teaching.
u. I'm basically a scholarly type.
v. I like regular working hours.
w. I like the exchange of ideas.
x. My mother/father is/was a teacher.
y. I like to show off what I know.
z. I like to help people.

STEP TWO "Making Choices"

Post copies of this list on the walls in various places of the room. Ask your trainees to approach the lists and read them over several times. Their job is to choose two and only two items that best describe their own motivation. Make clear that making a choice of two is indeed difficult, and involves many left out items. nevertheless, the instructions are to choose only two. Having made their choice, the trainees are to pin the two letters of their choice on a tag which is to be visibly displayed. (Possibly pinned on) Each trainee will now be labelled with two letters, such as : A , S ; or B,G

STEP THREE "Find a Friend"

Trainees are now to mingle trying to find one or two people who share at least one of their choices. Their job is to explain to each other why they have made this particular choice and to see whether their reasons for having made this choice are similar or not. (Give this part of the activity approximately 15-20 minutes)

STEP FOUR "Match or Mis-match"

Ask your trainees to mingle again. This time their job is to find a person with whom they do not share a single letter. They should again explain their choices to each other and this time try to analyze their differences. Are the differences based on attitude? On training? On teaching style or what? Are they perhaps saying the same thing differently? Can one persuade the other that his reason is a more compelling one, or will they agree to disagree? - Groups of three may well have formed. (This part should be given about 20 minutes)

STEP FIVE "The Neglected Child"

Allow trainees to return to lists. Their task this time is to find 'the neglected child' - that third item that they were originally forced to reject because their instructions had been to choose only two. They may slightly change this third item, making it more suitable to their real desires. Or they may combine two items into one. For example, someone may choose, "I want to become a teacher because I think that the work will permit me creativity and autonomy."

This time trainees are asked to write out their chosen or revamped statement in full and to wear it as a label. They are now to form groups of four and five with like-minded people and discuss their statements. (Give this activity 20-30 minutes)

At the closure of this activity, like at the end of any other training process, it is worthwhile to analyze each step with the trainees, hearing their reactions regarding each step and its applications to language learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The Flexible List allows for introspection through structure, flexibility and options. It permits your trainees to get about and mingle. It allows some serious give and take concerning their future profession and it involves the skills of listening as well as explaining. Trainees invariably find the activity stimulating and enjoyable.

I evolved this technique from one I learned from Dr. Ora Zohar at the center for teaching improvement of the School of Education, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

MA's AND POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS: THE WAY FORWARD

A reply to Rod Bolitho

Rod Bolitho's article Teaching, Teacher Training and Applied Linguistics (Vol. 2, No.3) is thought provoking and timely. However, rather than criticise MAs (and other post-graduate qualifications) out of hand, it might be more productive to look at the nature of the MA courses, and consider how they could better cater for the types of teachers' needs that Bolitho identifies.

Bolitho, quite rightly, argues for "professional know-how" rather than "academic excellence" and for teachers developing "a more humanistic assessment of their own development needs" rather than "academic prowess". However, these do not necessarily present an either/or situation. There is no reason why both professional know-how and a humanistic assessment of developing needs, as well as increasing self esteem, time to think, defining priorities, and the other aims that Bolitho mentions, should not form part of a post-graduate course. Indeed, I would argue that they should.

Instead of arguing against MAs, I would like to suggest that a post-graduate or post -qualification course should have enormous value in providing the very things that Bolitho argues for. It is the nature of the courses that needs looking at closely.

I would like to suggest that the following principles should be followed when running a post-qualification course.

1. They are developmental.
   Throughout the course, the aim is to help the teacher towards continuing her own professional development after the course ends, i.e., the aims are not just short-term. There is as much focus on the process of learning as on the content.

2. There is emphasis on reflecting and theorising. The trainees are required to reflect on their own experience, draw conclusions, and theorise from it.

3. There is emphasis on processing information. Rather than the trainer giving knowledge, and ready processed answers, trainees process new information, in the light of their previous experience, map it onto their existing knowledge, and draw their own conclusions. This brings us to the next principle, which is:

4. The course is non-prescriptive. Trainees take their own decisions. The trainers do not pre-determine the conclusions that the trainees will arrive at. Trainees may draw a range of conclusions depending on themselves, their pupils and their own teaching situations. And their decisions should be respected.

5. The trainee teachers' experience is valuable.
   It is not something to be eradicated and re-built.
   It is to be valued and used.

6. The course content should be negotiated. It is not only determined by the trainers.

7. The source of knowledge is not only top down.

8. The needs of the different teaching situations of the trainees must be considered.

I offer the above principles as a start. I am sure that others who run post-graduate courses will have others to add, and I would be pleased to hear them.

But the principle is clear. The trainee teachers, from the start, should take an active part in the learning process, and in shaping the course. The process of learning, and of learning how to learn is as important as what is learnt. I agree wholeheartedly with Bolitho that if the MA consists of passive listening and learning, its value is highly questionable.

Marion Williams
University of Exeter

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INTERVIEW

WITH ROGER BOWERS, CONTROLLER,
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DIVISION, THE BRITISH COUNCIL, LONDON.

T.W. When did you join the British Council?

R.B. I joined straight from University in the mid-sixties. It was the pattern then to do that and to specialise in one area with the Council. On the basis of initial interviews, it was decided that I had a bent towards E.L.T. and I've been bent ever since! (Laughter).

T.W. What was your training on the job?

R.B. During my first year with the Council, I went to Madrid to learn a bit about basic classroom techniques. The Council was just installing its first language laboratory and trying to convert fairly traditional textbooks to structural drill use in the language lab. After that I went to Birmingham University on attachment. This was before universities had cottoned on to overseas students. Birmingham University was the first to have a tutor for overseas students. I was appointed briefly her assistant. I spent 2 terms there doing what had not yet been invented as English for Special Purposes (E.S.P.) but was in fact ESP. I had a wonderful small office, all to myself, just inside the swing doors to the ladies loo. (Laughter).

T.W. What was your first overseas post?

R.B. Ghana, where Alan Maley was working as the English Language Officer. And virtually before I had any real sustained classroom experience, I found myself standing in front of pre-service teacher trainees telling them about the English Language, visual aids and group work! That wouldn't happen these days. We've got lots of people doing teacher training but they come into the Council with lots of experience behind them. But since then I've been almost entirely concerned with ELT and primarily interested in the training of teachers who are not, themselves, speakers of English as a mother tongue and who have a pretty forbidding environment to work in.

T.W. In what respect?

R.B. Large classes, few resources, almost no books. It's only when you get into that environment, not as a visiting specialist, but alongside, that you realise how difficult it is. In Egypt, 4 to 5 years ago, working with American and Egyptian colleagues, we had built up a very nice little resource centre with books and articles and photo-copying facilities. One term, the white ant got in. The Library had

to be fumigated and hosed down and we were unable to get at the resources for 10 weeks. It was the most difficult teaching period I've ever been through! (Laughter).

T.W. What was the programme in Egypt like?

R.B. Well, it was an Overseas Development Agency (ODA) funded project at Ain Shams University (it's still going on). I was there from 1980 to 1984. There were 6 colleagues from the British side, about the same from the American side with our Egyptian colleagues, a countrywide programme. It was an impressive integrated project, of pre- and in-service training and advanced development of specialists and trainers through Diploma and M.A. programmes (See Ref. 1). What I found interesting was the step up from teacher education to trainer preparation. There is a tension between one's desire to develop in trainers, advisers, and counsellors (often called "Inspectors" but their role is really to support teachers), to develop in them sensitivities and an ability to take each case on its own merits and to be responsive to individual teachers and, at the same time, the need in people who are

entering a very difficult profession, without the built-in advantages of the native speaker to have some sort of structure they can operate within and feel fairly confident with.

T.W. Sensitivity within a risk-free structure.

R.B. Yes. The analogy between trainer and teacher, that I like to strike is that, with teachers new to the profession, the old idea of the lesson plan is a good place to start. Initially teachers stick to a few known ways of structuring lessons, fairly rigidly. With experience they either use the lesson plans and embroider them as things happen or do away with lesson plans altogether and do things in a much more responsive and quick-thinking manner. Ideally the lesson plan should have gaps in it too, space for the students. But it's the gaps that worry a new teacher.

T.W. How does the analogy with trainers work?

R.B. Whereas you would not expect a confident and mature counsellor to need a schedule, a structured interview, for example, but would expect them to be able to take every teacher as an individual and simply converse and take an individual path with them, for someone new to training and counselling and someone who has insecurities in the subject matter, it isn't necessarily the way to start.

T.W. Are you suggesting a sort of trainer lesson plan?

R.B. Well, I'd like to describe to you a kind of paradigm that can be useful. By the way, I see training as a sub-category of counselling, rather than the other way around. The structure I offer is a period of Consultation, followed by a period of Diagnosis, followed by one of Remediation. Each period has a mnemonic to help you remember what to do next!

Consultation has "HORACE". That's

H is for HEAR (Listen to what the teacher says about their context, what they are going to be doing in the lesson and what, in particular, they'd like to have looked at)

O is for OBSERVE.

R is for RECORD (make sure something is left after the lesson other than memories).

A is for ANALYSE (using whatever observation method you've developed. There are plenty around).

C is for CONSIDER (stand back, think about the context and try to justify everything you've seen so as to put yourself as far as possible, within the constraints the teacher is operating under).

E is for EVALUATE (it may seem a bit early, but in my experience teachers are much more annoyed if you don't evaluate at all than if you evaluate too much!)

T.W. So that's the first phase. What was the second again?

R.B. Consultation. Here there are four "S's".

S for SYMPATHISE (indicate to the teacher that you understand the situation they're in and what they're trying to do. Recognise the strong points. Put yourself on their side in relation to the problems).

S for SELECT (you focus on 1 or 2 bits of measurable behaviour. They may well be the ones you focussed on in the hearing stage.)

S for SUMMARISE (keep your own contribution to the consultation pretty brief. There is a danger, particularly with new trainers, that they'll fill in all the time available!)

S for STUDY (with the teacher. Think about what happened. And very important, look at the evidence for what happened. This is why recording and analysing teacher behaviour is very important. Then say something like "It's interesting you've got this problem because a lot of teachers have it. It's been written about. Here's an article or a suggestion ..... ")

T.W. So the advice is not coming from you direct, and so may be easier to take.

R.B. Yes and it's all part of the solidarity. We're all in this together.

T.W. O.K. That's Diagnosis and Consultation. What's the third phase?

R.B. Remediation and here there are 3 "T's"! On the basis of agreement with the teacher there is

T for TRY AGAIN (The teacher doesn't need to do anything other than reflect and then go back and do it again).

T for TEAM TEACH (The trainer team teaches with the class teacher. This is a tricky one as it may affect the relationship between the teacher and the students. But if it's possible, the trainer can work alongside the teacher and taking responsibility, let's say, for the giving of tricky instructions.)

T for TRAIN

T.W. So teacher training comes last!

R.B. Yes! If you find that there's a skill that can be developed, and particularly if it's a skill that a number of teachers want developed, then you can move out of individual counselling and into group mode. The HORACE paradigm (See Ref. 1) is of the counselling situation. Once you get to the "TRAIN" part there is Tony O'Brien's "E-R-O-T-I" model (See Ref. 2) by which one means that any training course will involve the trainees Experiencing an activity as students, watching as Observers the activity being talked about, as well as Trying it out as teachers, discussing its Rationale as trainees and Integrating it into their existing practice.

T.W. But you deliberately set out to teach this basic Diagnosis, Consultation, Remediation paradigm with its attendant mnemonics on trainer programmes.

R.B. Yes. In Cairo, this is rigidly what we stuck to. Mnemonics are important. I met a group of Egyptian teacher educators not long ago on a Course at Reading University, supported by the British Council. Two of them were old students of mine and one, Fawzia, who I hadn't seen for 5 years, came up to me and said, "You gave a talk about textbook evaluation once and you used the abbreviation "SMILE". I can remember S and M, and I, but I can't remember what "L" and "E" were!" So, after 5 years, she was able to remember that there was a bit she'd forgotten! I think that's rather good!

T.W. So you've been using this paradigm for quite a few years?

R.B. Yes. I find it useful for several reasons. First, it highlights the relationship between counselling and training. We often tend to look at it the other way around. Counselling first is important, especially in in-service training where there is a wealth of experience that we should be drawing on. And secondly, because if you teach this model, and say that it's what trainers should be doing with their trainees then obviously it's what the trainer-trainers, on MA programmes and so on, should be doing themselves! It's not teaching practice that people on these programmes need. It's training practice! But like every paradigm or model, it's to be used for as long as it's useful, and then discarded!

T.W. Roger. Thank you!

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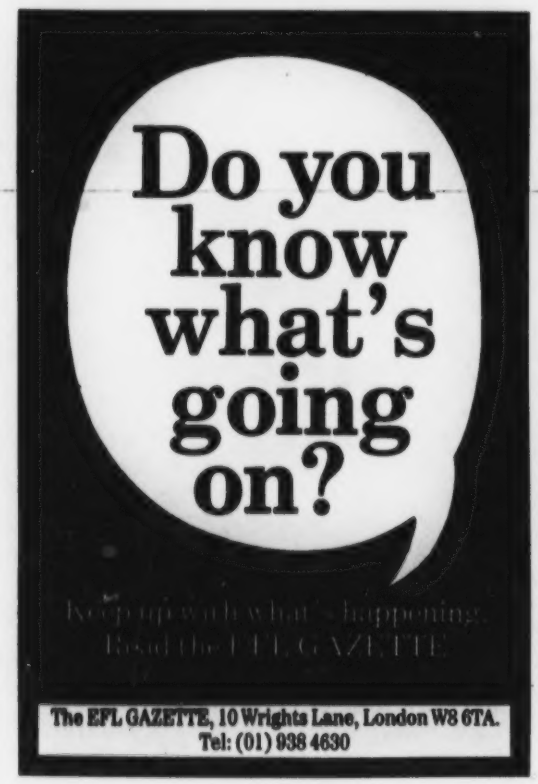

After meeting a number of teachers, parents and children belonging to "Steiner Schools", I visited 3 schools. The differences between these and other schools are immediately visible (classrooms painted wonderful colours) and audible (lots of music going on!). For information about the deeper differences I wrote to Rudolf Steiner House, 35 Park Road, London NW1 6XT and was put in touch with John Thomson who wrote the article below. Special teacher training is essential, for those who wish to teach in a Steiner School, to learn the teaching methods that arise out of Anthroposophy. Other differences between Steiner and mainstream schools are many: there are no fixed salaries for teachers, there is no Headmistress/master, responsibility for particular tasks such as finance or administration, is undertaken by individuals or groups within the school. For more information on Rudolf Steiner and Steiner Education write to the address above or read on below.

TEACHER TRAINING FOR STEINER SCHOOLS
by John Thomson

Are teachers born or can they be made? This is a question that has perplexed me for a long time. Often I am sure that they are born, they carry innate the peculiar gifts, insights and qualities that make children want to learn from them. Or they don't. And then no amount of training can make up for the deficiencies. But a number of teachers have made me wonder. For I have seen apparently unpromising students turn eventually into successful teachers. (I have also seen apparently promising students become very unsuccessful teachers). So for me the teacher remains a mysterious creature. The mystery of the teacher is connected, of course, to the mystery of the task.

ARE TEACHERS MADE?

GROWING-UP

When I first came across Steiner's views on education, I was immensely struck by the picture he gave of how the child develops. The physical changes that can be observed are outer expression of inner changes, and it is with these inner changes that our work is involved. Learning and, therefore, teaching before puberty are necessarily somewhat different from after puberty; also the kind of way the child learns before the change of teeth is markedly different from the process after. To a certain extent this is obvious. In the kindergarten children play, and the 8 year old at school is engaged in more formal learning.

But it is not just the difference which is important but the quality of the difference. The four year old is active without forethought, directly and immediately involved in doing things; moving, grasping, running, falling, standing and balancing characterise waking life at this stage. The child shares and participates in what happens around. He or she comes to imitate all kinds of activities and speech which are there in the environment. Imitation is one of the strongest features in early learning. Imitating is not copying. Only later do we see emerging the ability to copy in drawings, in movements. Then it is more an outwardly conscious process. Imitation is an unconscious process.

The 8 or 9 year old relates very differently to its world. The more awake intellect is concrete in its working. At the same time activity is still an important aspect of the learning process. In fact, doing is the usual springboard for understanding as in the younger years but now more consciously, more deliberately so. However, most important of all at this stage is the child's affective involvement in its learning. The child has to feel inwardly connected and bound up with the to and fro of learning. It has to feel a warm relation with its teacher. It has to feel lively interest in whatever it is asked to do. Dry and abstract learning is especially distateful at this stage. Not just distasteful but even harmful. Story-telling is an effective means of teaching just because if done imaginatively it engages the interest, arouses feelings, and so a way is found to the content and the meaning.

The adult has a vital role to play as the bridge between the child and the world it longs to understand. Teachers best serve this role if their work is artistic. Art not only awakens the senses and engages the intellect but it also appeals to the feelings of the child.

Again 15 or 16 year olds have different needs, different motivation often and different aims in learning. Adolescents, of course, are preoccupied with themselves and with quite new outer horizons. They have not only reached a new intellectual threshold but also begin to grasp things with a new imaginative capacity. Education for this stage in a Waldorf School should still be spread over a broad spectrum

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of the Sciences and the Humanities, but also practical work in crafts and arts as well as theoretical studies. It is in coming up against this wide range of experience that adolescents are helped to find themselves. And that is their particular need. Especially today. Adolescents have to be enabled to meet their own difficulties as well as their own successes. They often show themselves to be ferocious critics of the world they find themselves in and of the adults they have to deal with. This is not generally an unhealthy state. Rather it points to an aim of coming to a balanced understanding in different areas of experience. Making a piece of furniture, evaluating an historical situation, experiencing and working out social problems that arise, for example, in drama work - these all serve this aim of finding inner balance in judgement. Sound judgement is not best developed by giving undue emphasis to the critical faculty but rather by placing adolescents in learning situations where they have to find understanding for themselves.

AN APPROACH TO THE CURRICULUM

I have tried to describe the different situation of the young person in relation to learning at different ages. Much more could be said about these differences because we are not just concerned in education with the cognitive or intellectual development but also with the affective and the volitional or motivational.

In a Waldorf School the aim is to shape the curriculum to this understanding of development. Broadly speaking, before the change of teeth i.e. up to about the 6th or 7th year, the little child is an imitator and what the adult offers for imitation can have the profoundest effect. A wide range of play activities, circle games, baking, singing, finger games, listening to and play-acting fairy tales, a healthy diet and a warm environment in the non-physical as well as the physical sense, contribute a sound basis for pre-school learning.

Again broadly speaking, the second stage from 6+ to 14 has the emphasis on what one might call educating the life of feeling, as at the third stage after puberty the aim could be described as educating the life of thinking. Of course this does not mean making children emotional. Many adults today experience a cramping inadequacy in their feelings. These are often disconnected from their thoughts and unrelated to their deeds. Is this sorry condition not to be attributed to education which tends to ignore or even trample on this area of experience? The life of thinking does not only include academic studies but also practical work in crafts such as weaving, forging, surveying etc.

I believe that such an approach can support the emergence of the special qualities that live in each individual.

WHY TEACH FOREIGN LANGUAGES?

From the beginning, Waldorf Schools have attached much importance to the teaching of foreign languages. Usually two are taught to all children at least up to puberty. After that, further studies may depend on pupils' aptitude. In this country the two languages are French and German. In Germany they may be French and English or Russian and English. Beginning the languages at the age of 6 means that for three years the pupil is working entirely with the spoken language. Stories, songs, poems, class-room situations involving the use of the language, small plays, provide the content. In this way a feeling for the rhythm and sounds of the language is acquired. In the 4th year the written language is worked with. Grammar also begins to be important but the teacher has to find ways to present this in a lively and interesting way. Hearing a foreign language in this direct manner with the emphasis on oral use has considerable educational value. The child takes in something of the essence of French or German language and culture. In its early formative years this can be an invigorating and truly educative experience. If language training begins later at 12 or 13, it tends only to deal with the cognitive aspects and only few students touch the real spirit of the language. Oral work also has a social quality which is lacking in the visual emphasis on the written word. I think the more feminine elements are cultivated through the spoken and auditory while the more masculine find their expression in the visual and written. The former emphasise the social, the latter the individualising processes. We need both in education. (Of course I use these terms to indicate qualities present in both girls and boys).

EDUCATING THE TEACHER

What does this viewpoint mean for teacher training?

Let me list a number of elements which are important:

a) Artistic education. This is important for all teachers. It is particularly important for class teachers who take a class of pupils for eight years from the age of 6 - 14. It is not unimportant either for upper school teachers in, for example, Mathematics or Physics where an artistic sense can greatly help the pedagogical method. Teachers whose main theme will be the teaching of an artistic subject like painting or music in the upper school require a full training in their art before taking up teacher training.

b) An active understanding of child development i.e. not just a theoretical one but an imaginative conceptualisation of growing up in body, soul and spirit, as well as a careful observation of the children one is educating. Observation has to be trained.

c) A wide interest in contemporary life and culture.

d) The teacher has to recognise the need for self-knowledge. This, of course, is an on-going process. It has to become a conscious one and not just rely on the knocks and blows that life may bring in any case. It means a readiness for self-education.

e) Development of the teachers' skills. Lively and imaginative presentation of work. Awareness of rhythm in the lesson so that children are not bored or over-tired. An understanding of lesson structure. A sense for class order and discipline and how this relates to interest and the development of social feelings.

These are the most important elements in a teacher training programme. Of course the programme has to include a sufficient time in teaching practice for the student to get a feeling of how he or she relates to the children and to the task. This is the acid test.

Successful teaching means a strong commitment. In a Waldorf School the class teacher will have eight years with the same class as they grow from 6 to 14 years. This is, of course, an exceptional responsibility. Working closely with colleagues who can support and share experiences and insights is essential if this system is to succeed. The absence of a head teacher in a Waldorf School makes the sense of personal responsibility and of group colleagueship absolutely vital. This poses the questions: How can schools be structured so that the teacher has the right kind of freedom to develop his or her own unique style and method, and so that the maximum advantage can be derived from the collaboration of teachers? What kind of preparation does the teacher need in order to function in this way? I see these quetions as especially important at this time of Educational change.

SELF-ACCESS TEACHER TRAINING
by Ruth Wajnryb

Introduction

Self-access in teacher training is for the teacher trainee what self-access is for the language learner - an opportunity to take initiative in and responsibility for one's own learning.

This article - inspired by Gerry Kenny's The Teacher Homework Technique in THE TEACHER TRAINER VOL. 0 Autumn 1986 - offers two suggestions for open-ended teacher training tasks, one in the realm of Language Awareness, the other in the realm of Register. They both involve homework projects in which the trainee's personal awareness of language and related areas is enriched through a process that is exploratory and interactive. The term "self-access" is apt in that the trainee seeks out the learning experience for him/herself and takes it where and as far as is personally meaningful.

1. "Snippets"

The trainees are asked to collect 10 "snippets" of natural language. These are to be recorded in writing with close attention to a faithful rendering of what was actually said. Trainees

TRAINEES ARE ADVISED TO CARRY ABOUT WITH THEM A SMALL INCONSPICUOUS TAPE RECORDER....

are advised to carry about with them a small, inconspicuous tape recorder, and/or notepad and pencil. The "eavesdropping" can occur anywhere - at breakfast, in the street, on a bus, at a party, in a shop, - wherever facilities and opportunities allow. Exchanges should be about 6 "lines" (utterances) long (or about 3 exchanges between participants). Among the 10 "snippets", trainees are encouraged to include one or two telephone conversations - transcribing one side only, "intuiting" the other. As well as the transcribed "snippets", trainees are asked to "provide" information (some of this is really informed guesswork) about contextual features - such as the participants, the setting, the purpose or functional tenor - and linguistic and paralinguistic features of relevance - such as voice quality and the distance between interlocutors. In

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all, the 10 pieces of language should include a range of topic/participant/setting types.

What do trainees gain from this rather time-consuming and logistically clumsy project?

* They find out first-hand that spoken language is very different from written language, being governed by its own rules and conventions and characterized by its own patterns.

* By being immersed in a totally descriptive experience linguistically, they tend to become less rigidly prescriptive in their approach to language - less of language "as it should be" and more of language "as it is".

* They also experience some of the harsh realities of listening - the acoustic problems of extraneous, environmental noise, soft voice quality etc.

* On a semantic level, they are often astounded at the implicitness of dialogue among participants with a shared understanding of the field of discourse - "I know what they said; I've no idea what they were talking about".

The impact of this increased sensitivity to natural language - raised consciousness, if you like - reaches into many corners of a teacher's professional life - from choice of language samples to error management; from design of communicative tasks to determining learning objectives and planning teaching programmes.

2. Register: a convention-breaking exercise

This exercise follows a series of sessions on Register in which pre-service trainees are introduced to the notion that language is culturally determined and situationally defined. They see that verbal behaviour, like other types of behaviour, is inextricably linked to socio-cultural conventions. They consider some instances where language-learner error is register-based - for example, inappropriate register use, or mixed register use.

The homework project involves the trainees' deliberately planning a convention-breaking incident of their own choosing - for example, being excessively polite with an intimate; being overly explicit with a close friend; being invasively personal with a casual acquaintance; omitting deference or respect-showing signals in an asymmetrical relationship; raising a topic inappropriate to a relationship; assuming shared knowledge where there is no basis for such an assumption; accompanying a chosen register with atypical intonational features; etc. The trainee is to plan (premeditate!) the incident, carry it out, comment on the convention violation and any contextual features or other points of relevance. (They are also advised to explain/apologize afterwards where necessary!)

What do trainees gain from this potentially risky adventure?

* They discover how firmly based are the assumptions underlying the conventions on which language use is based.

* They discover how difficult it is to consciously violate a socio-cultural convention, to knowingly disrupt the harmony of predictable discourse.

* They find out, too, how easily offence can be caused, so replicating the experience of many an ESL/EFL learner living in target-language communities.

The impact of the heightened awareness induced by this activity touches both the affective and the academic domains of training. On the affective side, the trainee has a heightened empathy for the foreigner operating on host territory. On the academic side, in appreciating the importance of register in language learning, trainees realise that it should not be an icing-on-the-cake inclusion in the curriculum of the post-intermediate student, but rather that it should be informing the learning of all learners, from beginners up.

In conclusion:

We learn by doing, by trying out, by seeing for ourselves. These two exercises in self-access teacher training are designed to point the way to some doors which the trainee may open and, at their own pace, walk through.

Observation and Feedback

TAKING THE STRESS OUT OF DISCUSSING LESSONS:

AN OPTION-BASED APPROACH

by Tessa Woodward

You should've... I should've...
You shouldn't have... I shouldn't have...
Why didn't you...? I could've...
You could've... Where I went wrong was...
I wouldn't have... I don't know why I...
I would've... It was terrible...
Where you went wrong was...
Everything was okay until you...
It wasn't terrible but you...

This language has a strong feeling about it of confession, recrimination and defence. It's backward looking. It's the churning over of past mistakes. How do you feel when you hear language like this? Does it make you feel good, or rather uneasy?

These phrases are a small sample of language I've heard come up again and again in discussions between observers and teachers who have just been observed, or between teachers talking about their own lessons. My thesis is that the language is unhelpful. It suggests that there is a right way and many ways of going wrong. It breeds unease and insecurity in teachers whether they are just thinking over their own past lessons or whether they have been observed by colleagues or a tutor or assessor. It makes teachers feel they have made bad mistakes in choosing certain tactics or techniques. It closes down options.

I take the word 'options' from Earl Stevick (Images and Options in the Language Classroom, Cambridge University Press, 1987). Every time a teacher walks into a classroom a range of options opens up in front of her. She can say "hello!" to the class, or go straight to the board, or talk to one student or many other things. Each option has its advantages and disadvantages. Going straight to the board to draw something may get everyone's attention in a quiet, undemanding way but it may also make some students feel cheated of a greeting. Whichever option is chosen initially will, in turn, open up a further range of options. So, standing at the blackboard, drawing, a teacher can choose whether to draw silently, ask the students what they think is being drawn, or ask students to come up and join in with the drawing. Any of these options has built-in advantages and disadvantages and in turn opens up new ranges of further options.

Diagrammatically, this might look like Figure 1.

At any moment in a classroom, a teacher standing on her little teaching feet, has choices before her, options to take and each one will have its own advantages and disadvantages and be right in some way and certainly be right at some time.

Looking at lessons in this way can lead to a different kind of language being used in post-lesson discussion.

'Option-based' language:

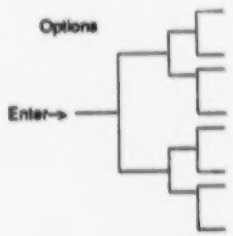
I decided to do...	You did...
I had to choose...	It was one option...
I chose to...	The advantage of it was...
The advantage was...	What do you feel was the disadvantage of taking that option?
The disadvantage was...	
Another time I could...	Another option available then was...
And if I did, the good thing'd be ...	The advantage there might be...
But a disadvantage would be...	Another time you could choose
I'll have to weigh it up ...	another option...

The language here feels free. The discussion seems to be less concerned with the moral obligations of the observed teacher and more concerned with discussing different tactics and when might be good times to employ them. Options are not closed down and discarded. They are discussed, weighed up, and kept in mind for future use in different situations.

When people feel that there is a right way to do something and lots of wrong ways, they become wary, scared of making mistakes. We know this in language learning. We talk of someone being over-concerned with accuracy, preoccupied with not making mistakes. We talk of over-active 'monitors'. It happens in teaching too. But thinking of teaching as a series of choice-full options, all of which are right in some way and all of which have their disadvantages, leads to realistic, unrecriminating, forward looking discussion.

Next time you hear some of that judgemental language popping out of your own mouth you might like to try changing it to option-based language. It's surprising what a change it breeds in feelings and attitudes!

Figure 1.



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AUTHOR'S CORNER

John Fanselow writes about the background to his book Breaking Rules (Longman, 1987, ISBN 0-582-79733-0)

In 1962, as an American Peace Corps Volunteer, I started teaching at a teacher training college in Uyo, Nigeria. In addition to teaching English language and literature, I was expected to supervise practice teachers three weeks of each term. Having only just completed practice teaching myself and yet being called upon to make suggestions to teachers in the programme who had taught for from two to twenty years made me very eager to get ideas. Just as I was wondering where I might learn about the teaching of English to non-native speakers of English, John Rogers, a British Council Officer who spent a good amount of time in the field, visited me and introduced me to books by M. West, A.S. Hornby, F.G. French and L. Billows. I was electrified by the suggestions these authors made, and passed on many of the suggestions to the practice teachers I visited. I also tried some of the suggestions myself!

After teaching in Uyo, Nigeria for two years, I shared the suggestions from West and others with other American Peace Corps Volunteers bound to teach in Nigeria. By this time, I felt I was beginning to apply even more of the suggestions West and others made, mainly because I had the chance to suggest them to so many others that I could not help but try them myself. In order to relate the suggestions to textbooks teachers used, together with others doing training and scores of Nigeria-bound Peace Corps Volunteers, I put together a collection of lesson plans, and, with homage to M. West, titled the collection Teaching English in Exhilarating Circumstances. I revised the book a couple of times to include lesson plans built on different textbooks used in other countries, and, of course, developed by new groups of teachers.

As I continued to train teachers, I spent more and more time observing them and found that the collection of plans was not helpful in observing nor in discussing lessons. The plans were tied to material in such a specific way that it was hard to see how any of them related to each other or to larger ideas or themes or beliefs. So, I began to make check-lists of what I saw teachers do in an oral reading lesson or during a drill or while giving a dictation, etc. I supplemented the items on these lists with suggestions made by methodologists in their books. I finally made about twelve lists, which I called "guides" with about 30 items per guide. In the guide for oral reading, for example, I had items from West such as "Teacher read orally with eyes on the class, Teacher read orally with eyes on the book, Individual students read orally in sense groups, Individual students read orally in sense groups and looked up and said the sense groups to another person," and I had items from observation such as "teacher read while looking at students with emotion."

The only task the user of the guide had to perform was to note "yes" or "no" after each item. If an item was checked "no" it meant that it was not observed in the lesson and so the teacher had an item to try out later. If an item was checked "yes", it meant the teacher had used the activity described. The aim was to provide a description of what was done and have available some alternatives that were not done and that could be tried out in a subsequent lesson.

So from a collection of lessons plans that took up 168 pages in Teaching English in Exhilarating Circumstances, I rearranged the great bulk of the suggestions in the book into a dozen sheets of foolscap paper with around thirty suggestions per one-page guide.

On the back of each guide, I had space for the observer to write down actual exchanges observed in the class. This was because simply indicating "yes" or "no" on the front of the guide failed to provide any idea of what the lesson was about. After years of observing, I found that writing down student and teacher exchanges provided a great deal of material for later discussion.

The exchanges were so rich that when I was involved in making a film about teaching in Somalia, I and others decided that juxtaposing visual scenes in classes with actual exchanges had the potential for making an exciting orientation film. So, I began tape recording classes. As I replayed the tapes later, many teachers took more interest in the critique or feedback sessions than I had ever noticed before.

As I was finishing the film, I was introduced to books on classroom observation by Flanders and Bellack. From these I began to develop a conceptualization of the teaching act that would allow me to incorporate in one framework, suggestions from methods books that had so electrified me years earlier, activities I had observed during ensuing years, and new methods books by people such as E. Stevick, W. Rivers, C. Gattegno, C. Curran, to name a few.

To re-cap - in a way that is much neater than the way it probably happened - I have been observing teachers as part of my job responsibilities since 1961. In the beginning, I was forced to advise teachers who had much more experience than I did. Reading methods books by West, etc. provided me with suggestions to share with teachers. I felt that the more specifically these suggestions were related to the textbooks teachers used, the more helpful they would be. But, over time, I found that there was much to learn from the practices teachers engaged in. While relating practices to textbooks in precise ways provided teachers

with something to do on a particular day, they did not provide any aid in generating alternatives nor in conceptualizing the teaching act. In short, making suggestions in either a methods book or in critique or feedback sessions or providing teachers with lists of practices fragmented teaching, and made the teacher, the "student" of an observer. The lesson plans and guides were also abstractions. The exchanges requested on the back of the guides, and the recordings I made to use with the training film provided the only material from lessons that was not abstract.

The time I started to record was coincidentally the time that some people started to record classroom exchanges in order to try to describe classrooms. Reading Bellack shortly after I made recordings excited me about the idea of developing something that would (1) provide teachers and observers with specific suggestions similar to those in Teaching English in Exhilarating Circumstances; (2) provide teachers and observers with checklists of activities similar to those in the guides; (3) remind teachers and observers that actual exchanges are worth discussing; (4) provide a conceptual framework within which to relate seemingly disparate suggestions to systematic checklists as well as to actual exchanges.

I decided that I wanted to describe communications not only in teaching settings, either in classes or on the street, but in conversations, at work, and in what many call "real life situations". I call my conceptualization of teaching, FOCUS - (Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings) - to highlight the fact that we can know teaching only as we juxtapose it with what we consider not to be teaching.

I studied teachers' treatment of errors as one step in developing my conceptualization of teaching. Looking at video tapes over and over again forces one to reconsider categories dreamt up in the abstract or based on the ideas of others. By looking at many tapes and testing the categories on suggestions made in a range of methods books, I finally came up with a set of categories that could be combined in a range of ways to describe at least five dimensions of most communications in teaching settings and non-teaching settings. (i.e. The Source/Target of communication, the purpose of the communication, The Medium, The Use, The Content).

Ironically, though I have devoted a great deal of energy and thought to developing the categories that make up the coding system - the foci for observing - the point of the coding system is not to learn the categories for their own sake but rather to use them to try to see teaching differently.

Yes, strange as it may seem, my aim is not to try to solve problems teachers may say they have nor to try to improve teaching. I am interested in seeing. When I make suggestions, either to myself or others, I do so to provide a contrast. In fact, one of my central tenets is simply to do the opposite. If the students say what words mean every day, I suggest that they draw what words mean on another day. If directions seem clear, I urge that unclear directions be given. If directions are always given, I urge that directions not be given. By juxtaposing two contrasting sets of communications, we can see the characteristics and consequences of each and thus see that many things we thought "would not work" do work in ways we had not considered, and many things we thought "would work", work less well in ways we had not considered.

I have been given various curious looking sun-glasses by people I have worked with. Each is a symbol of a different view of the world. We each see the world through our own particular lenses. I am interested in providing ways for me and others to try on different sun-glasses and other glasses as well. This is one important reason why I wrote Breaking Rules, and, I think, in retrospect why I majored in Spanish, went to Nigeria to teach, and have done many other things - to be in situations that enabled me to try on other lenses.

NEWS

L.A.U.R.E.L.S., the Latin American Union of Registered English Language Schools, has been set up to bring together like-minded, progressive private sector EFL/TESOL institutes. Their policy statement says that, among other things, LAURELS schools are actively committed to teacher training and regular teacher development programmes. The first issue of 'Laurels News' is published. Information from Laurels News, Rua Goias, 1507, Centro, Loudrina, PR, CEP86020, Brazil.

ADVISORY PERSPECTIVES

- a view of the work of the National Association of Language Advisers, (NALA), Britain by Philip Dahl, an advisory teacher with Somerset Local Education Authority (LEA) and member of NALA.

NALA was founded in 1969 and counts among its 200 members the vast majority of LEA Advisers and Inspectors in the field of foreign languages. NALA holds its own annual course conference, publishes a journal twice a year and holds regional meetings between 3 and 5 times a year.

For teachers of languages in British schools, as well as heads and governors the Language Adviser provides several perspectives on their work. The role of adviser varies according to the size, composition and policies of any one local education authority. Sometimes the adviser is a specialist, sometimes a generalist, and other times more an inspector.

The following fictitious interviews aim to show differences in the contribution of Language Advisers to language learning in the U.K. The views expressed are the writer's own.

Interviewee: Robert Cunningham, Head of Modern Languages in an 11-18 mixed comprehensive.

PD: As a classroom teacher, what contact do you have with your adviser?

RC: It varies. My first contact was at my interview here, three years ago. The adviser usually attends interviews for senior posts.

PD: Only senior posts?

RC: Yes, mainly. There's not enough time for advisers to involve themselves in all appointments ... Then, our probationary teacher - he's in his first year - has to be observed teaching on two occasions, before getting full qualified teacher's status.

PD: But I thought advisers were like trainers?

RC: Ah, well. In-Service Training is - or used to be - mainly an adviser's responsibility. Schools state their own needs more these days ... which can still involve the adviser in many ways!

PD: How does this work out?

RC: Well, our adviser usually tries to support our course developments here. We're developing new courses, there's the new exam and continuous assessment, as well as trips and exchanges. Whether we meet in school or in the Teachers' Centre, the adviser puts on sessions, or helps us organize school-based meetings. Things are changing a lot in education at the moment. We need someone who can keep on top of it all.

PD: Can I ask you how you individually see your adviser?

RC: Well, when I first got this job, I was very lucky. I got a lot of help, you know, ideas, sorting out priorities. When you're up to your knees in alligators, it is dead useful to have someone who can help you chart the swamp!

PD: Do advisers also evaluate the work of senior teachers like yourself?

RC: Well naturally. If I go for another job in another LEA, for example, I'll ask for a reference. Within the LEA the adviser will be asked for an opinion of my work. And advisers will almost certainly be involved in the new teacher appraisal schemes. Oh, and we had a school inspection last year. A number of advisers came into everyone's lessons. So yes, it's an important role.

PD: Thanks very much. That's useful. Could you remind me where the Head's office is?

Interviewee: Anne Wembley, Headteacher at Robert Cunningham's School.

PD: How does the role of Language Adviser appear to you as a Headteacher?

RC: Well, to be honest, in an LEA of this size, we don't see advisers as often as I'd prefer. For most advisers, I know, there are more schools to visit than there are hours in the day, or days in the working year. But I still wish there could to be more follow-up.

PD: What do you look for when you see the Language Adviser?

RC: When there's a chance, I look for clear information about recent developments - in terms I can follow. There's too much jargon these days ... If I'm to know what the LEA policy is, then the

adviser can be a great help. Take last year's inspection, for instance. I thought the work the Language Adviser did was of the best. Detailed, constructive, managed to draw the teachers together and clarify their sense of direction.

PD: Am I right in thinking, that if a teacher is having problems ... ?

AW: Yes. We had a teacher who was rather up against it ... found the classes very hard going. The adviser offered all kinds of support, practical suggestions, a course, observation visits to other teachers in other schools ...

PD: And eventually?

AW: The teacher decided to look for a job outside teaching. Finally got something in a local company, which exports to Germany.

PD: Would you say that heads tend to think that an adviser is something of a miracle-worker?

AW: Clearly not everything can always work out like that. But if, to take another issue, our exam results in, say, German slump noticeably, then I think it's up to the adviser to work out what's going wrong, don't you? After all, the governors and the parents will want to know the reasons.

PD: I see. Well, thank you for your time.

AW: You're off to the Education Office now, aren't you?

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Interviewee: Martin Sheldon, Senior Adviser in the LEA.

PD: How do you select a new adviser?

MS: Depends on various factors, really. The job's changing all the time, so what we look for varies. I suppose you could sum it up by breadth and depth of experience, - middle or senior management in schools, up-to-date knowledge of the "scene" but with the common sense to select priorities, keep things in perspective the whole time. Personality is important; they've got to come across to teachers, senior staff in all schools.

PD: What do you require of, say, <u>your</u> Language Adviser?

MS: There's the routine of inspections, report writing, coordinating curriculum development. but things are moving much more along generalist lines these days.

PD: Could you explain that for me?

MS: There is a move away from the adviser working entirely in one area of the curriculum, say just in Modern Languages. We're developing a policy here of advisers working in particular groups of schools with the aim of supporting the work of their schools across the whole curriculum.

PD: Teachers tell me that advisers have to "keep on top" of new developments. Doesn't this generalist tenency make that even more demanding?

MS: Certainly. There is a huge amount of documentation these days. Specialist opinions have to be sought so that elected members and senior officers can be kept informed, so that their position on issues can be stated. Then funding arrangements are changing; there are applications to complete to bid for government grants. And if grants are forthcoming, time has to be found for planning work programmes, recruiting teachers for secondments, establishing support teams and running courses. In this way, an adviser often takes a lead in developing a new course programme with a group of teachers ...

PD: The picture I'm getting seems a long way from language learning in the classroom, as I'd imagined it.

MS: That depends on how you see language learning. You take any school language class and what those children are doing with that teacher is very often tied up with decisions taken by authors or publishers, by examination boards or in the examination council, as well as at government level. Educational publishers need good authors and good advice. Committees also need the right kind of representation - people who know and keep in touch with classrooms and everyday practice.

PD: Do you consider it possible for schools to work without advisers?

MS: I'm a bit biased about that! Let me just say that I've been in this job now for long enough to know this. With society changing so rapidly, what children learn and how they learn has to change to keep up with the future. A future most of us can only guess at. Schools tend to be designed and run mainly for stability, not for change. Children do need a secure learning environment, I know. But managing and enabling change is not something I feel teachers can do alone at the same time as keeping the present show on the road. It's teachers who make plans real in the classrooms. But the plans have to be thought through in local terms. Policies and systems need people to realize them. I can't see myself how schools can possibly be as responsive as the public wants them to be without the support that good advisers provide.

PD: That's been very helpful. Thank you very much. It will certainly be interesting to see how things develop over the next few years...

Philip Dahl would like to make it clear that the views expressed in this article are his own.

A TEACHER TRAINING COURSE IN CHINA: A BROADENING OF HORIZONS

by Bruce Morrison
Lecturer on Advanced Teacher Training Course
Tsing Hua University
Beijing
CHINA
at the time of writing.

1. Background to the Advanced Teacher Training Course at Tsing Hua University

EFL teaching in China has generally been of a very traditional nature with the emphasis on grammar-translation and rote-learning. It is, however, recognised by many teachers that the results attained by students who have been learning English for very many years are far from satisfactory (particularly with regard to speaking and listening skills).

Against this background the Advanced Teacher Training Courses (ATTC) were set up in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou jointly by the British Council and the Chinese State Education Committee with the aim of improving the performance of EFL teaching in tertiary institutions. The idea was for those teachers who participated on the courses to go back to their institutions and pass on any useful experience to their colleagues, and so disseminate what new ideas they felt were relevant to that particular teaching situation.

2. The ATTC

Each year approximately thirty teachers from tertiary institutions come to Tsing Hua from various parts of Northern China, particularly from Inner Mongolia.

They have at least two years teaching experience, are aged between twenty-two and thirty-five, and come from a variety of social and educational backgrounds. They also tend to come with a variety of differing expectations and aims concerning the ATTC: some want to find ways to improve their teaching, some want the diploma to aid their chances of promotion or increase the possibility of their being able to study abroad, some want a chance to improve their English, while others are sent by their unit.

Our aim is for the participants to return to their institutions at the end of the course having:

- widened their horizons with regard to the myriad of different approaches, methods and techniques that are available to the EFL teacher, without propounding any particular one;
- improved their proficiency in English through EFL classes, as well as prolonged exposure to native-speaker language;
- been introduced to some aspects of British culture;
- been introduced to some of the basic ideas current in Applied Linguistics (a facet of the course that is seen as crucial by the Chinese for teacher development), and having been able to set these in the context of EFL in China;
- been given an opportunity to try out some new ideas in micro-teaching and teaching practice, and thus then being more able to judge their relevance to their own particular teaching situation;
- gained greater overall confidence in their abilities as EFL teachers.

The course is taught by two foreign "experts" (recruited by the British Council), and a number of Chinese counterparts. The counterparts, who are chosen primarily for their experience and proficiency in English, sit in on many of the lectures and seminars - perhaps giving papers, or otherwise contributing - and then go to Britain to do an MA in Applied linguistics or TEFL before returning to the ATTC to take over eventually from the foreign experts.

3. Some problem areas

It was soon apparent that it would not be appropriate merely to export the type of EFL teacher training course that is commonly given in Europe (e.g. the RSA or similar) and simply apply it directly to the Chinese situation. There were first a number of obstacles to either overcome, circumvent or accept. Of these I shall concentrate on one that tends to overshadow the others and briefly mention those others that have figured most obtrusively in my experience.

3.1 What is Teacher Training?

"'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said ..... it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more or less'". 1

Herein lies our greatest potential obstacle - what the West perceives as teacher training is often at variance with the view of teacher training taken by many educational institutes in China. In the West, teacher training is seen as necessary both pre-service for novice teachers, and for experienced teachers in the form of further in-service training (often referred to as teacher education - reflecting its on-going nature in contrast to initial teacher training). This process of teacher education is seen as essential to the development of the individual as a teacher, as well as to the programme as a whole.

3.1.1 The aims of Teacher Training: the primary aim of a teacher training course (I use the term from hereon to refer to both initial and

in-service courses) in the West is therefore to develop and improve the teaching skills of the course participants (although individuals may perceive the course in terms of personal career advancement). This can be seen within the following framework:

> The aim of a teacher training course is to develop the participants' -
>
> a) **awareness** of students
>
> language
>
> materials
>
> b) **ability in** classroom management and planning
>
> presenting and practising new language
>
> practising and integrating the use of the 4 skills

The place of any pedagogical or linguistic theory covered on the course is primarily to underline and inform practice. It is therefore not seen to be necessary, for example, that teachers of EFL should have an extensive knowledge of the field of Descriptive Linguistics.

3.1.2 Course Components: the components of a teacher training course will normally include the following:

- some elements of teaching methodology directly applicable to the participants' teaching situation
- classroom management, lesson planning, course design etc.
- language analysis
- materials: use, adaptation and production
- testing and assessment
- teaching practice.

Of these, the one that has been increasingly seen as vital (e.g. RSA 1982, Gower & Walters 1983) is the practical, teaching practice component. Teaching practice is taken to mean any form of observed teaching including peer or micro-teaching of a class specially recruited for the course or trainee's own (or another teacher's) regular class, all of which have their own advantages and disadvantages (RSA 1982: 21-23).

Teaching practice is seen as essential for the following reasons:

1. to provide back-up and input for theory sessions - including giving participants an opportunity to evaluate new ideas and options, and experiment with different approaches/techniques;
2. to help participants to develop self-confidence in the use of different teaching techniques, self-reliance and self-evaluation of their teaching skills;
3. to encourage participants to learn from each other's teaching;
4. as a way of relating course content to the individual.

3.1.3 The View from China: It would seem that many institutions in China hold a rather different view of what constitutes teacher training. Maley (1982) suggested that:

> "Most Chinese host institutions take this (teacher training) to mean language improvement for their teachers." (Maley 1982:2)

This view has to some extent, in some places, been modified to accept the notion of a "training" element but ideas of what should actually constitute a teacher training course still seem (from my own limited experience and from discussion with others involved in teacher training in China) to differ fairly sharply from those generally held in the West.

As mentioned above, a sizeable element of language improvement is seen as essential - a notion that one may agree with, given that the participants are non-native speakers who have had little (or no) exposure to native-speakers and native-speaker teaching materials, and given that the teachers should be providing the best possible models of the target language. This should not, however, be seen in terms of the oft-implied axiom - "**knowing**" more English = "**teaching**" English better.

Although the situation is changing, most novice teachers still leave university as language graduates and immediately begin teaching with little or no initial pre-service teacher training; and may never actually do any in-service training. For those who do enter onto courses designed as teacher training courses and (more importantly) those who are involved in the setting-up and running of such courses, the aim often seems to be seen only in terms of promotion and advancement. This seems to be due in part to the present teaching situation and the limited number of such courses available; but also to the nature of many of the courses themselves. Instead of being short practical teacher training courses (such as the RSA four-week certificate courses) which would offer a grounding in the basic elements that constitute modern teaching of EFL, they are (like the ATTC) offered at universities as quasi-MA type courses of one year (or more) in length with emphasis tending more towards Applied Linguistics than the practicalities to be met in the Chinese classroom.

Due presumably to the influence of traditional views of the nature of learning, the learning

of theory tends to be seen as the goal of these courses with the lecturer providing a "font of knowledge" upon which the participants depend. This is in direct contrast to the emphasis in the West on self-reliance and the individual development of the participants' own particular styles suitable to their own circumstances and personalities. This attitude can place very great restrictions on the development of the individual as a teacher since -

> "a teacher can only teach what he is - he teaches himself"
>
> (Brumfit 1982:52).

The subject matter is meaningful only in relation to the particular individual and is not generally applicable to all teachers in all teaching situations.

Symptomatic of the Chinese attitude is the lack of importance attached to teaching practice - where some of the views and notions put forward by the lecturers can be examined, tried out, and then either accepted or rejected by the individual participant.

The overall situation can perhaps best be summarized in the diagram below.

3.2 Terminology

Another potential minefield is one which is common to all such courses but particularly dangerous within the Chinese context given the great importance attached to the teacher as the "font of knowledge", and that is the over, or incautious, use of terminology or jargon. Participants tend to learn the terms rather than understand the concepts that lie behind them and the practical applications they refer to.

3.3 Equipment and facilities

Because of the often very limited amount of hardware (such as cassette recorders, photo-copiers, videos and books) that is available, many elements of a teacher training course are impossible or irrelevant.

3.4 Acceptance of Western EFL methodology

There are two attitudes (both widely-held by foreign and Chinese EFL teachers) that form two extremes of the pedagogical spectrum as regards the applicability of modern Western teaching methodology to the teaching of EFL in China. The first is that anything in the

T/T in the WEST

concept central to EFL teaching

pre-service and in-service seen as important

aim: improvement of teaching skills

content: practical skills
theory only to underlie practice

style: learner-centred

T/T in CHINA

becoming increasingly accepted

predominantly pre-service or "learning as you go"

aim: language improvement promotion

content: language improvement
applied linguistics

style: lecturer-dominated

form of Western EFL methodological thinking is the "correct" way to teach English; the second is the reverse - that "China is different", and so, although it may be a good idea, it will not work here.

Both of these are too narrow, particularly in their monolithic view of China which ignores the different teaching situations that exist in the different regions and provinces. There is need for flexibility, a willingness to examine new ideas, discuss them and experiment, but on the other hand, the examination of such ideas should be a critical one that does not merely accept something because it is "in vogue" in Western EFL.

4. Some further thoughts

What all of us involved in teacher training in China have learnt, is that while foreign experts bearing the gift of new EFL methodology from the West are not the whole answer to the widening of the horizons of EFL teaching in China, modern EFL teaching approaches and techniques can be of value if applied judiciously within the existing teaching contexts.

There is perhaps one sensitive question that needs to be asked: are these teacher training courses to be used primarily to improve the standard of EFL teaching in China, or to provide an opportunity for individual advancement (not that this is necessarily a bad thing per se)?

My own feeling is that what is needed are teacher training courses tailored to local conditions and requirements, but clearly aimed at the improvement of EFL teaching throughout particular institutes. This would hopefully have more of an impact than the creation of an "elite" who tend to keep their newly acquired knowledge to themselves rather than disseminate it to their peers. The emphasis of such courses should be clearly practical, introducing techniques that can be tried out by the participants in teaching practice or micro-teaching slots so that they can evaluate them in terms of their own particular teaching situation.

Notes

1. Traditional English nursery rhyme - quoted Maley (1982).
2. Maley's paper was on the topic of "The Teaching of English in China" and, while much can be said to have changed, it remains a useful reminder of some of the common misconceptions that abound in the world of EFL in China.

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Training - Inside and outside your own school

by Sue Leather

This article is about my experience of training inside and outside my normal place of work. I started noticing, a few years ago when I was a teaching supervisor on a local RSA course, that there was a kind of liberation in being away from my own school. I felt that the quality of my training work outside was better in every way. I was more sympathetic towards the trainee teachers than I certainly felt towards the teachers I usually worked with. I became more inventive, more in tune with their problems and more effective. Well, perhaps I just needed a change.

Of course, in-service training is completely different from the one-off training session, or even a short course. For one thing you usually know everyone really well; and they know you. If you're not careful it can degenerate into just another staff-room chat session, especially in a small school. For another thing, it's often compulsory for the teachers and the trainer. This is perhaps the key point. You have to do it on a certain day at a certain time, because it's scheduled. You and they may be less than enthusiastic about giving up what could otherwise be a free afternoon. It could soon become "groan ... in-service training ... groan ..." Not exactly the right frame of mind for productive training.

If I hadn't 'gone outside', perhaps I wouldn't have noticed the qualitative difference. It's only by comparison with the outside that the 'inside' looks dull. But now that I've seen it, things will never be the same again!

Recently I did a 1½ hour session for a group of Modern Language teachers during a 3 day conference on the Communicative Approach. It was a bit like being on honeymoon - or having an affair - exciting, different, new, and thoroughly enjoyable! I certainly had a great time and, judging by the feedback, the trainees did too. If that is the honeymoon, then in-service work is the marriage. You have to work hard at it, it's sometimes very difficult, and the rewards are long-term rather than immediate. Or so my married friends tell me.

So is it impossible to re-create the honeymoon atmosphere once you're well and truly into the marriage? I haven't really found the answer but I think the questions are worth investigating. Worth it if for no other reason than that my in-service trainer's guilt is unproductive. So, in case you are in the same quandary as me, I am going to share with you the results of my personal brainstorm. In the best tradition of brainstorms, don't, at this stage, dismiss the suggestions out of hand. Mull them over for at least two days before judging them.

- share the responsibility for in-service training with someone else

▶▶

MAPPING THE DAY

Introduction

During intensive courses, some participants feel as if their brains are going to burst. So much happens in one day that they feel as if there are thousands of ideas swimming around in their heads. There is a real fear of forgetting. Other participants will enjoy this feeling of plethora, of cornucopia, and will not worry about recording or remembering individual activities.

To help those who need to remember and order what has gone on in the day or the week I sometimes hold short "mapping the day" sessions.

This idea will probably only appeal to trainers who like to do some mental ordering after a busy period. Other trainers are invited to skip this article!

Ideas for "mapping the day" sessions

I feel these sessions work best if they are voluntary, a maximum length of 20 minutes, held after a tea break or other break from the main course, and at the end of a day's work or an intensive course. Other tips are: to stay, where possible, in the same room that the main course was held in, but to sit in a different part of it e.g. on the floor, away from the front, near a window, and to be as informal as possible. Everyone remembers and orders in a different way and it's essential that this is respected. Also these sessions are supposed to decrease stress not add to it!

It's just as well if you the trainer start off with some ideas for recalling, organising, questioning or recording the main events of the day. Here are some ideas. Use one at a time i.e. one only for each session and a different one each time for the first few sessions.

1. Individuals list in chronological order and note form the main events/activities of the day by remembering out loud as a group. "Didn't that come before the listening activity?" "Oh, I thought that was later".

2. Again using the group memory, try to list the events of the day backwards i.e. from the most recent first.

3. Each individual writes down the key words (maximum of 10 words or phrases) summing up the main feelings of the day. These are then shared.

4. Individuals remember one thing from the day and share this with the others. The one thing can be the one that is most/least interesting, memorable, likeable, strange for the individual.

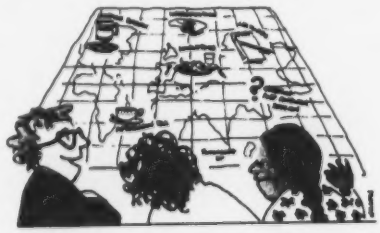
5. Individuals draw mind maps of the day using the same central "seed word" but any organisation of branches they wish (see The Teacher Trainer, Vol. 2, No.3). People then look at each other's mind maps and add things to their own that they wish to.

6. Individuals think through the day and make a note of any areas they would like to act on either by doing follow-up reading, discussion, thinking, practice etc. These action notes are then shared.

7. The group recalls the content of the day and then tries to recall the process i.e. how each idea, opinion or piece of information was transmitted.

8. The "animateur" or tutor of the day talks about their decisions, choices, problems, pleasures from the day's work.

9. The group, after remembering the main content blocks and processes of the day, compiles a list of the implications of the work done for their own work back home.



Once you have used a couple of these ideas as the basis for different mapping sessions, you can offer the group choices next time as to ways of working. Also ask them for ideas of how to remember, re-order, re-frame, and re-learn work. Don't take in any of this work, let people do it in their own way and you do it in your way too. Don't hurry. Some days people won't feel like mapping. Other days it will be impossible. But on most courses there is usually a core of people who need to do it, enjoy it and create their own learning opportunities by doing it.

The Editor.

Training - Inside and outside cont'd

- ask a different member of staff to schedule the meeting each time
- treat yourself to a course for trainers
- hold a meeting, the subject of which is 'The purpose of In-Service Training'
- don't do any sessions yourself for a whole term
- ask teachers to produce their own programme
- don't do any in-service training and see if anyone notices.

By the time you read this, I may just have had the courage to try one of them myself!

The Potential For Teacher Development In Poland

This short article arose out of the IATEFL Special Interest Group Symposium held at Avery Hill in London in January 1988. One of the points under discussion was the spectrum of interpretation given to training vis-a-vis development. Training, at the one end, was seen as developing certain skills and abilities with particular objectives in mind, and development, at the other, as a self-fulfilling need involving whole-person investment. That theme arises in this article too:

Let us begin with a simple definition of Teacher Development (TD). Something along the lines of: striving for greater self-knowledge and personal growth through meeting regularly with like-minded colleagues and exchanging with them ideas/strategies/procedures - indeed anything that will facilitate the personal and professional growth of the individuals working within the group.

It may be useful to list some of the constraints which the Polish context places upon TD and the opportunities which it offers.

To start with the negative:

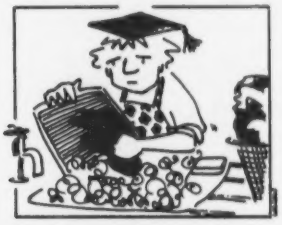
- little in the way of, and no variety of, materials; at secondary level imposition of the standard, never-varying textbook (might this perhaps be turned to advantage as the scenario is one of an uncluttered mind?)

- isolation! - no communal facilities or meeting places (and none of an attractive nature) in which to develop opportunities for exchange of view (accommodation generally is at a premium and this also extends, of course, to private accommodation)

- no paper/pen/paste/reprographic resources through which to develop ideas if opportunities were available

- no common hours outside teaching, coupled with an overriding need to offer private lessons in order to command a salary to live on

- difficulty in escaping from the pressures of everyday living - nothing of a labour-saving nature in household management in a situation where most of the profession are women with homes to run and where male/female roles still follow fairly traditional patterns



- a lack of confidence in one's own ability as a teacher brought about, particularly at lower levels of linguistic ability among secondary teachers of English, by lack of contact with native speakers of English on the one hand and a British cultural environment on the other - little opportunity to visit English -speaking countries

- an overemphasis, often total domination, of theory at the pre-service level of training which is quite unrelated and irrelevant to the in-service context where there is little by way of formalized provision.

It seems clear to me, as I have suggested in point one above, that these constraints will not always militate against the formation of Teacher Development groups. They may sometimes facilitate the formation of them. Lack of training provision, harnessed to a system where there are no formalized rewards for investing effort in self-improvement, is more likely perhaps to result in an I-can't-be-bothered attitude among teachers or groups of teachers. Yet it may result, given appropriate stimulation, in an I-must-nevertheless-do-something-about-it stance among others.

Perhaps we should now move on to list those aspects of the Polish context which, it seems to me, are more likely to facilitate or generate the formation of TD groups. You've had the bad news. So, now, what about the good? In favour of TD are the following factors:

- the immense value which Poles place on learning as a skill; attitudes to learning which are open, motivated and receptive. I am not quite sure what motivates this, but it is remarkable and has to do with a long history of needing to be flexible, adaptable and resourceful.

- attitudes generally which are receptive and responsive to change and enable a different or modified view to be taken

- a perceived training need and a generally high level of enthusiasm to take up the relatively few training options that are available - most of them through British Council in-country courses

- a teacher view which regards methodology (what I do in the classroom and how I do it) as the main requirement for self-improvement. This closely followed by, and often inextricably linked to, the perceived need for language improvement. (It has been noted - preliminary findings from a teacher questionnaire initiated by Roger Berry - that at the least competent end of the spectrum the priorities are usually reversed)

- a likelihood that training sessions/seminars in many cases will generate Teacher Development groups, provided catalysts from within the training session groups can be found who will facilitate this. The work done in such TD groups may need to be linked to some form of tangible benefit which organizations such as the British Council are able to provide.

We offer these views in the hope that they may strike chords and provoke thoughts among colleagues working elsewhere in the world and thinking of setting up Teacher Development groups. We would be very pleased to hear from you either through these pages or in private correspondence if indeed chords are struck!

Roger Woodham, English Language Officer, The British Council, Poland, with contributions from Liz Hayes-Turek, Deputy Director, The English Language Centre, University of Gdansk and Roger Berry, Reader in Applied Linguistics, University of Poznan.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of particular relevance or interest to teacher trainers are:

UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL (U.A.I.) PUBLICATIONS

U.A.I. Publications feature an experiential approach to learning in the areas of Organisation Development, Management Development and Human Resources Development. The following books are of interest to modern language teacher trainers although the content will need re-writing for your own situation.

A handbook of structured experiences for human relations training edited by J.W. Pfeiffer. 10 volumes, each containing 24 ideas that can be freely produced for educational or training purposes. Ideas are inductive, providing direct rather than vicarious learning. Each idea is presented in recipe format stating goals, group size, time and materials required etc. Recipes on e.g. 'Exploring Group Stress', 'Developing Appropriate Trainer Responses'.

Language Teachers at Work: A description of methods by A. Peck, Prentice Hall (1988). Lessons in French, German and English as foreign languages were observed in France, Germany, Norway, England and the U.S.A. in secondary schools and other institutions. Via a series of case studies of specific teachers and classes and concentrating on the themes of presenting texts, conducting oral practice, teaching grammar, teaching free expression and teaching listening comprehension, comparisons are made between various modes of teaching as to teacher talk, student talk, use of mother tongue, teacher spontaneity, medium-oriented and message-oriented language and other factors. A very interesting peep into other teachers' classrooms. Teachers will inevitably find themselves comparing their own practices with excerpts in the book.

Experimental Approaches to Second Language Learning by V. Cook, Pergaman (1986). Eleven papers to persuade the reader of the value of an experimental approach to the study of L2 learning. Example themes are the way in which multi-linguals learn a new language, alleged deficits of L2 speakers in language processing, the techniques of L2 learning research, the problems of basing research on one particular group of learners. Detailed. Academic.

The Q book by J. Morgan and M. Rinvolucri, Longman (1988). A teachers' resource book with about 60 ideas to help language students ask questions of themselves and each other. The exercises are grouped into 'reading and discussion', 'oral work', and 'writing' but are also marked for topic, language and structures, level and length of time.

Learner Strategies in Language Learning by A. Wenders and J. Rubin, Prentice Hall (1987). At last, a lot of the pioneering articles on learner strategies all located in one book! About the only book on the market on studying learner strategies and promoting learner autonomy.

Activities for Trainers by C.R. Mill. (1980). 50 useful designs for adult groups under the titles 'Group Dynamics', 'The Training of Trainers', 'Cross Cultural Training', 'Stress Training', 'Supervisory Training' etc.

Training Theory and Practice: Edited by W.B. Reddy and C. Henderson, Jr. (1987) 25 articles from the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioural Science around the themes of the history of small group training, trainer development, learning in small groups, training innovation, multicultural training. Interesting pieces on role theory, using 'game'-like activities, rules of thumb for trainers.

(All the above available from
U.A.I. Ltd.,
Challenge House,
45/47 Victoria Street,
Mansfield,
Nottingham NG18 5SU
England.)

Language People: The experience of teaching and learning modern languages in British Universities by Colin Evans, Open University Press (1988). This "group portrait" is an attempt to describe and understand the experience of a group of 100 people (50 staff and 50 students) all in Modern Languages at Cardiff, Salford and Southampton. The author got people to talk about how they got into modern languages and what it's like now they're in it. At first irked by the fragmenting of the interviews, I then found the author's intervening comments so refreshing and insightful that for me the book's format worked well.

The new English Teaching Syllabus for Israel schools. Rationale and graded objectives for teaching English as an International Language and based on the concepts of communicative competence and performance. Available from Rafael Gefen, Chief Inspector for English, Ministry of Education, Jerusalem 91911, Israel, if you'd like to see another country's national curriculum for a foreign language.

The Learner-Centred Curriculum by D. Nunan, CUP (1988). About the concept of a curriculum negotiated between learners and teachers. Grounded in studies of what language teachers actually do and think as they plan, implement and evaluate their programmes. Also reports on Australian study of teachers' views on the abandonment of a centralised curriculum in favour of a negotiated local model.

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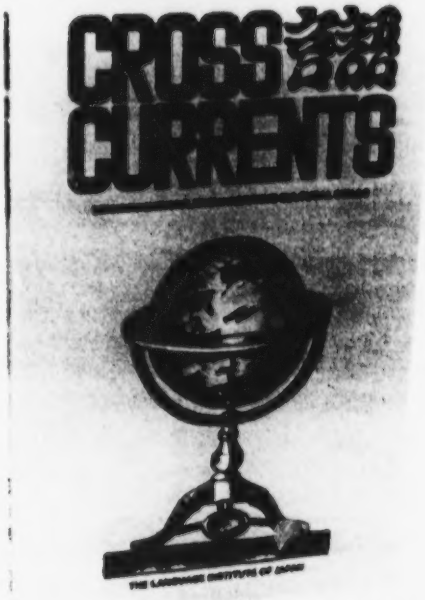

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

A Practical Journal mainly for modern language teacher trainers

Volume three Number three

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The Language of Economics ELT Document 134

Editor: Tony Dudley-Evans

The volume will draw together various strands of research and teaching related to language and economics. The key paper will be that of Professor McCloskey, an economist who has criticised the evidence of economics writing in his book "The Rhetoric of Economics"; other papers will develop Professor McCloskey's ideas through the application of methods of discourse and genre analysis. Other contributions evaluate experiments in economics teaching at secondary and tertiary level to both native and non-native speakers. *333 51217 0*

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THE TEACHER TRAINER

VOLUME THREE NUMBER THREE AUTUMN 1989

Published Three Times a Year

EDITOR: Tessa Woodward

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Views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of Pilgrims English Language Courses.

EDITORIAL

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Welcome to another 32 page issue absolutely stuffed with text! We have kept the rather dense format so far, but thanks to readers' suggestions, the design in future will be easier to read. From next issue the print will be a little bigger and there will be more space around each column so if you're suffering from eye strain then things should ease up soon.

In this issue you'll find the second part of Peter Grundy's critique of pre-service teacher training courses that run along 'Presentation, Practice and Production' lines. Part One was in the last issue.

If you're wondering how to help your trainees get to grips with "theory", either their own or other people's, there are two articles to help. Sara Walker gives a step by step session plan and Jonathan Marks explains how to gain visual impact in a session. Reading these two articles in conjunction could be interesting.

We visit Spain twice in this issue too. Kate Pearce tells us about the annual visit of teachers, trainees and tutors from London University, bent on practicing on the locals. Leslie Bob Wolff and Jose Luis Vera share the expertise of Spanish teachers' groups.

Happily we have the voice of another U.K. Modern Languages Adviser in this issue, Guy Richeux. He asks the fundamental question, 'what sort of modern language teachers do we need?'

'The Teacher Trainer' regularly runs series on different themes. Not all themes appear in each issue. In this issue we welcome back the following series:

Interviews Alan Maley interviewed Dr. Prabhu earlier in the year when Prabhu was in England attending conferences and giving workshops. In the interview Prabhu explains his concept of 'the teacher's sense of plausibility'.

Observation and Feedback This time Richard Denman supports the case of delaying feedback until well after the observation of teaching.

Have you read ..... ? Mario Rinvolucri writes about John Fanselow's book 'Breaking Rules'. This book was the subject of Author's Corner in the last issue so you may like to read those two pieces in conjunction too.

Meet a colleague This time our colleague, Natalie Hess, is someone who has lived in Sweden, America, England and Israel. At the moment she is studying in Arizona but this interview was conducted in England one summer when she was passing through.

Training around the World and Trainer Session Plan have already been mentioned above.

As well as our major in-depth piece and the established series, we also have some shorter pieces written by newcomers to the journal.

Jenny Van der Plank has given us a couple of short, practical ideas.

Great thanks too to John Morgan for making us a cross-word with both easy and cryptic clues. The solution will be in next time. It'll probably take me that long to do the puzzle.

Enjoy the issue!

ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal will come out three times a year and will make use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN?-some relevant teacher training procedures by Peter Grundy

WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN? - a critique of accepted pre-service teacher training by Peter Grundy (Part 2)

INTRODUCTION

'Language acquisition .. is a process in which the learner actively goes about trying to organize his perceptions of the world in terms of linguistic concepts'. (1)

The learners were split into groups of three. The groups had been asked to think up some new technological wonder, and then to give themselves roles: Chair, inventor, sales manager. Each group was to prepare a presentation of their invention for the rest of the class. It was this phase that was to allow the free practice of interruption strategies:

'This wonderful machine..'

'Excuse me, I'm not sure if I heard you correctly.'

'THIS WONDERFUL MACHINE will dig holes in the ground..'

I beg your pardon, did you say 'ON the ground'?' etc.

It was perfect, it was satire, it was the most enjoyable 20 minutes I've ever spent in a classroom: a learner only had to raise a finger preparatory to interrupting, and the whole of the rest of the class, the RSA trainee, her colleagues, myself, we all roared. We were helpless. People were mopping their eyes, holding their sides, disappearing under the tables. Monty Python's language lesson (courtesy of the RSA Certificate Course) was in full swing.

Here was a trainee with so limited a capacity to think consciously about language use that this lesson (like most of her others) was disastrously flawed. But the quality of her personality was such that she could laugh with the rest of us and sustain (in fact create) the most enjoyable, and least embarrassing 20 minutes of the course. As a person, as a potential teacher, outstanding; as someone able to fulfil the requirements of the RSA Certificate Course (i.e., to demonstrate 'the ability .. to devise and operate appropriate activities for the controlled and free practice of the language presented'(2)), well, the assessor would need a sense of humour.

This article is about how someone with natural warmth and sympathy, but without discernable language awareness, can and should be highly rated on a teacher training course.

========

THE AXIOMS

I ended the first of these two articles, 'Gone to Teachers Every One' (GtoTEO), with a list of 24 axioms, which I repeat here:

1. Encountering a sample of language should be seen as a means to an end rather than a target in itself.
2. Skill divisions (listening, speaking reading, writing, translation, interpretation, etc.) are generally unmotivated by theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). They also limit what is possible in the classroom.
3. The learner is the only true language resource.
4. The use of authentic 'teaching materials' should be downgraded; other so-called 'teaching materials' should be dispensed with.
5. Learners should not be offered models of language to imitate.
6. The notion of a learner-generated syllabus should be respected.
7. Learners should be enabled to express their own (and not someone else's) meanings.
8. The methodology (including materials and technology) should be in the hands of the learner as at least an equal partner with the teacher.
9. Distinctions such as learner:teacher, native:non-native speaker, proficient:less proficient use of the language should be dissolved.
10. Learning should be person-related and essentially experiential .
11. Language learning is not an end in itself but part of the larger process of living - thus distinctions such as those between classroom:home, school:street are unmotivated.
12. Language learning progress should not be measured against a syllabus nor against standard language norms.
13. Language teaching should be learner driven and seek to make the learner autonomous.
14. It isn't the individual units of which a larger unit is made up that matter to meaning, but the larger units of which any particular smaller unit is a part - for Phonology, the supra-segmentals; for structure, the information structure of the discourse.
15. Only knowing what a piece of language means (or counts as doing), and nothing else, is what enables us to (learn to) use it.
16. The way anyone thinks (s)he learns must be respected, but it isn't always a reliable indication of the processes themselves.

17. No lesson should ever have an ordained structure that pre-exists its content; the starting point for every lesson is the learners.

18. Institutions should respect learning style, and not vice versa.

19. Everybody can learn a second or foreign language, but not everyone is ready or predisposed so to do.

20. Nothing should happen in a language learning classroom that isn't worth doing in its own right - the fact that it's in a foreign language should be an incidental bonus.

21. Bilinguals typically privilege one code for one context or purpose, the other for another.

22. Learning a language also involves learning to use it in conversations with people less proficient than oneself. This is especially true for an international language like English.

23. An Interlanguage (or language learner grammar) is a valid system requiring an explanatory machinery no less elegant than that required for standard varieties. There is no logical reason to regard Interlanguage as a stigmatized variety.

24. All learning involves learning about oneself, and therefore every lesson requires genuine learner investment.

The starting point for a pre-service teacher training course might well be a set of such statements. Each has real implications for the classroom and invites discussion and class-room work with lessons or parts of lessons that put the statements to the test.

The strategy of this article will be

(a) to make lists of various kinds
and (b) to give examples of lesson strategies that are useful in teaching or teacher training.

The axioms are the first of these lists.

Together, the axioms give character to a number of superordinate points implying a rationalist (see 'GtoTLO') view of language and the learner:

- that the learner already knows how language works and does not learn a second one by imitating models

- that we should draw on the resources within the learner (the compulsion for self-expression, the wealth of personal history and experience (autobiography, memories, dreams, etc.)

▷

Subscriptions Information

Please support "The Teacher Trainer"! It's the only publication existing solely as a forum for the modern language teacher trainer.

The cost for three issues a year is:-

Individuals	£13.00	including postage
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The journal is for a specialist audience and so circulation figures will be considerably lower than for more general teaching magazines. The costs of producing a journal do not, however, sink appreciably just because the circulation is small. We have, therefore, settled on the figure above .....

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(b) contribute an article about .....

.....

.....

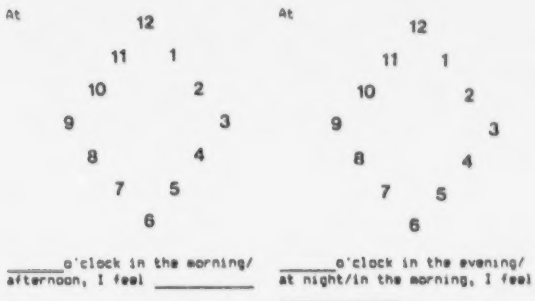
Procedures cont'd

- language learning, if we are ready and willing, is a natural process (I take it for granted that I don't need to recite the arguments of Krashen and others here)

- the language of a learner is neither less systematic than nor inferior to that of a native speaker.

AN ILLUSTRATION AT BEGINNER LEVEL

Some readers may already be getting itchy and wondering about, let's say, beginners and all this fancy stuff. So just by way of illustration, yes, what about beginners? Let's take tell the time, a topic we all have to teach our beginners. The Cambridge course introduces telling the time with a different clock-face for every five minutes. Here's a very simple alternative in line with the approach implied in the axioms:



1. The teacher prepares clockfaces as above, large enough for wall display, and with relevant adjectives written into the centres. (You can colour code the adjectives for familiar/new or student/ teacher supplied.)

2. Each learner can now make true sentences about him/herself as well as ask how others feel at particular times.

Thus learning is individualized and plenty of obvious person-related activities follow from this enjoyable way of being introduced to telling the time.

So the axioms point up a philosophy and are to be seen as the background to this article, which will now go on to consider teacher quality, lesson structure, and teaching resources.

=========

TEACHER QUALITY

Have you ever tried to follow the teachers' instructions in Streamline? In my experience, there are so many such explicit directions that, even with the best will in the world, they are impossible to memorize and perform exactly as directed by the authors. (I hesitate to ask what chance the learners have got if the teacher can't memorize the procedures.) But you see the point: for these kinds of materials, the ideal teacher is a machine-like automaton - if we press the right buttons, it's supposed that the disk will be copied from book to learner via that bundle of semi-conductors that in our old-fashioned way we still call a 'teacher'.

In fact I think the qualities that make a good language teacher are far less specialised than the teacher's guides to most coursebooks suppose, and unlikely to be established (although they may be implanted) by a short training period. They certainly include openness to change, goodwill, confidence, imagination, the will to participate as an equal, the ability to withdraw entirely, affectivity - and several other qualities that a group of trainees might sit down and work out. These are not techniques so much as awarenesses, and although I don't wish to decry techniques, I do think that personal qualities or awarenesses ought to be worked on in a teacher training course too. Nor is there any reason why procedures entirely suitable for the classroom shouldn't be used with trainees to heighten self-awareness. I suggest just two by way of example:

1) I WISH I ...

(This is an idea I learnt from Susan Basnett at the University of Warwick. It works well with groups of 5 - 6.)

Each member of the group has three slips of white paper. On the first, (s)he writes I wish I was..., on the second I wish I could.. and on the third I wish I had.. and then completes each of the sentences. You could specify a teaching 'wish' or leave it completely open. Each member of the group then writes their name on a coloured slip of paper.

All the slips are folded and put into a hat (or however you do it). Next, each person draws out (a) a name slip (other than their own), and (b) any three white slips.

Allow 5 minutes for each person to work up a statement beginning, 'I'm..', followed by the name on the coloured slip, followed by the three wishes, followed by a statement of the kind of person the wishes suggest the speaker is.

Thus the statement should reflect a corporate character different from that of any particular member of the group but based on three sentences produced within the group.

After each statement, the member of the group whose name was used at the beginning of the statement comments on the extent to which the description matches or fails to match his/her character.

This has obvious awareness-raising potential for a teacher training course, and variations on the theme (e.g., leaving out the names and simply creating fictional characters) are well suited to the language classroom.

2) APPRAISING A COLLEAGUE

(This exercise occurs in another guise in Designer Writing (3))

Two trainees sit across a desk from each other. They have 20 minutes to find out (and note down) as much about each other as possible. After 20 minutes they are asked to split up and write a short evaluation of their partner's character based on (a) what they've found out, and (b) that person's horoscope. (You need to supply full-ish horoscopes for each required star sign at this stage.) These evaluations are then offered as gifts to the people who inspired them.

We use this exercise in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes where the horoscope is a source that needs to be both quoted from and summarized within the student's own piece of more extensive writing. So again, it has both classroom and obvious trainer awareness applications.

In my view, no one can be a successful language teacher if they think of themselves only as a source of knowledge and a bundle of professional techniques. They may become very accomplished, but, beyond that, one needs also to be aware. An understanding of the teacher's facilitatory or enabling role in making learners self-sufficient and the sensitivity necessary to relate to people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds seem to be more and more important. Ultimately, a set of personal qualities and an inherent commitment and sincerity matter far more than knowing how to set up free practice in interrupting. We all know this - I wonder why we so often repress it in face-to-face interaction with trainees?

LESSON STRUCTURE

Taken out of context, John Macnamara's quotation (with which I began 'GtoTEO')

> Language is a particular embarrassment to the teacher, because outside school, children seem to learn language without any difficulty, whereas in school with the aid of teachers their progress is halting and unsatisfactory (4)

might be thought to imply that language learning opportunity is on offer either in the street or in classroom. In this section of the article, I argue for a procedure that's neither natural, in-the-street type learning nor the Presentation - Practice - Production type classroom routine responsible for so much 'halting and unsatisfactory progress'.

The type of lesson I'm arguing for focuses on the learner rather than on sequenced or graded subject-matter arranged syllabus-wise; it avoids studying or imitating models of language as an end in itself; and above all, to be a good lesson it does not require (in fact, it strongly disfavours) criterial prototype such as the 3 P's. Instead, the perfect lesson will be a prototype or best example.

The argument is that there may be a hundred, a thousand, brilliant lessons, none of them sharing a common set of properties. The prototype, will be one that enables one to say

> Language acquisition .. is a process in which the learner actively goes about trying to organize his perception of the world in terms of linguistic concepts

It will be a process in that the active learner will be organizing his/her language, and testing the quality of that organization of the world by talking meaningfully to colleagues, whilst all the time reacting to their reactions.

If I'm right, then the job of the teacher trainer is to help trainees to see ways of putting together lessons that enable learners to be linguistically active on their own account. I offer one or two (not very prototypical) examples that I've tried with language learners on teacher training courses and which seem to provoke interest and lead to a degree of enthusiasm for what I'm proseletyzing.

SOME EXAMPLES

In HABITS, each learner spends ten or fifteen minutes listing

- a bad habit (s)he has tried unsuccessfully to break
- a bad habit (s)he is ashamed of (but can talk about)
- a bad habit which annoys someone else
- two good habits that (s)he would recommend to others.

For the next hour, learners work with as many different partners as the time allows, comparing habits and counselling each other. Only really good advice on how to break bad habits or genuinely helpful recommendations of good habits that are really worth trying maybe recorded in the reflection/writing pauses that occur between working with one partner and the next. HABITS is the simplest idea imaginable, and yet it results in learners discussing really meaningful things in a concerned and tactful way with one another. It also provides a context for a type of personal learning that is rare in any area of life.

In ESCAPES, learners discover whether they truly wish to escape or not. I found a useful cartoon, which works well as a warm-up. It shows 'a gentleman' waiting in his motor car in the early hours while the woman who is obviously eloping with him, having come down ▷

Procedures cont'd

the ladder from the open upstairs window in her fur coat, attempts to get his car started with the crank handle. (5)

It makes a good jigsaw exercise, with the learners in small groups each describing their piece of the cartoon to three others with different pieces, so that eventually they can recompose the whole cartoon, and recognise that all too often one 'escapes' back into the situation from which one was running away in the first place. (Second marriages, please stand up now!) Because it's important that the theme of escape should be explored realistically, and in a way that enables one to relate it to one's own life, this, or some other such warm-up exercise, may be useful.

In the lesson proper, the learners first fill in a simple ten item questionnaire, which asks them to record where they would escape to, with whom (if anyone), what they'd take with them, what crime they'd commit before going if they could get away with one, who (if anyone) they'd keep in touch with, how they would want their lives to be different, etc. The final question is, 'Would it work?'

Once the questionnaire is completed, each learner works with as many learners as the time allows, the purposes being

(a) to revise one's own escape either in the light of any better suggestions one can glean directly from anybody else, or simply as a result of a change of mind as one talks it through

and

(b) to try to work out whether each of one's partners is by nature an escaper, and whether they would be happy in their new lives.

During this activity, it also helps to have a group of 'social psychologists' going around eavesdropping, with a view to coming up with a diagnosis of our society's collective sense of discontent as implied by the commonest answers to the ten questions.

The mood-setting exercise preceding ESCAPES also illustrates how it may be best to approach a sensitive theme relatively cautiously. Often techniques (e.g., jigsaw listening) are particularly useful at this stage. For this reason I give a technique-full example of another mood-establishing preparatory exercise to conclude this section, this one described as I presented it:

In ADVERT FLASHING, I played six TV commercials on Fast Forward (FF) (and therefore without sound). Once the class established there were six, I divided the blackboard (bb) into six equal segments. I played the commercials 5 or 6 more times on FF while the class wrote in the segment for each advert as many of the actual words (e.g., 'Bird's Eye') as they could spot. Then I played it another 5 or 6 times while they simply splurged the bb with vocab associated with the images. The class was then asked to specialize, and broke into two halves, each half specializing in a single commercial. The purpose was to work out exactly what was happening and being said with only FF glimpses as a guide.

(Perhaps I ought to tell you now that I had previously thought out how each of the six commercials could serve as a lead-in to an activity build around a theme of significance. For convenience sake, I'll now describe just one of the two chosen commercials. I hope its theme will be clear from the description.)

The man wakes up in the middle of the night and looks at his alarm clock. It's 3.09. The light is moving across his ceiling. He goes to the window and sees a helicopter outside hovering over a car (a Peugeot 309). Its rotors are disturbing the curtains and causing the light to flicker. He runs out of the house, pulling on his clothes, unlocks the car and gets into it. The helicopter flashes a message: Follow Me. He goes on a hairy cross-country drive, most of the time actually out-pacing the helicopter. Suddenly he's back in bed - he wakes up - the fan's causing the light to flicker across the ceiling. It's 3.09 by his alarm clock. He goes to the window and looks out. His car is standing peacefully in front of the house, and frame by frame, the following words appear on the screen: THE REALITY IS EVEN BETTER THAN THE DREAM.

Thus I was able to prepare the class for further work on a significant theme (dream/reality) through an introductory, technique-full exercise.

I realise that none of the three exercises/ activities described above is all that special. Rather I've been interested in outlining the sort of way techniques (pair-work), the prepared questionnaire, jigsaw listening, a video application) ought to be used on training courses - not to introduce models of language but to enable meaningful exchanges that learners would actually want to engage in if they were working in their own languages.

TEACHING RESOURCES

One upshot of the argument of 'GtoTEO' is that neither a structural nor a notional syllabus is sustainable. If we cannot waste time listing fragments of English grammar or exemplifications of interruption strategies, what then will a language teaching syllabus contain? I've been surprised at how many of my colleagues in the profession find it hard to conceive of a syllabus in terms of anything other than fragmented pieces of doubtful and incomplete knowledge.

I think a syllabus is what to go to as you start to plan a lesson. The only thing I'm absolutely sure I've learnt about language teaching from the practice of it is that it's crucial to separate what might loosely be called 'thinking up ideas' from actual lesson planning. This is because when one comes to planning the stage by stage activities of any particular lesson, one needs an ideas bank from which to select. Otherwise, sitting down to plan a lesson without resources to draw on always makes lesson planning a slow (not to say depressing) experience. And it often results in tired lessons that one doesn't really feel enthusiastic enough about.

THE IDEAS BANK

So my syllabus is an ideas bank. It seems to me highly desirable on a teacher training course to show trainees how to open an account at an ideas bank, or in fact, how to open several. I may be marginally in the black in one or two of my accounts, so I'll show you some recent statements by way of illustration.

THE BRUNER ACCOUNT

Since I've already mentioned him in 'GtoTEO', I start with my Bruner account. It's a rather abstract list of human capabilities lifted from several places in Toward a Theory of Instruction.(6) I often find myself working from these notions in looking for a lesson's theme, or content, or activity stages:

recognition
prediction
self-accounting
ordering
processing info
paraphrase
notation

interpolation	extrapolation
conceptualizing	problem solving
self-consciousness	retrievability of info
representing reality	transforming reality
representing info	exploring alternatives
exchange	transfer of info
evaluation	

and affect drive rational regularity relating to change.

LESSON THEMES ACCOUNT

Secondly, and with adult learners in mind, I've a list of lesson themes that are (a) person-related, and (b) enable the learner to contribute areas of knowledge and experience in which (s)he may quite conceivably have more to offer than the teacher. Since they tend to focus on abstract ideas, some of these themes are more suited to adult than to younger learners.

receiving	giving	curiosity
escape	consequence	motive
prediction	resolution	superstition
habit	anxiety	forbidden fruit
choice	decision	expectation
obligation	duty	belief
reform	property	dream
coincidence	occupation	money
living together	generation	society
creativity	independence	ideal
perspective	romance	sharing

I've already described lessons/activities built around two of the themes on this list.

HIGH INTEREST ACCOUNT

And then there are the short-term, high-interest accounts. For example, we recently brainstormed ideas for an introductory EAP course designed around skills useful both in British society as a whole and in a study context. The need area would of course be different for language learners with a different instrumental motivation, but again, it's the way of thinking that I'm attempting to illustrate:

getting one's way
seeking info
giving info
organization
strategy

indirectness	disagreeing
gathering info	interaction
finding out	choice/decision
obligation	directness
reaching consensus	solving problems

and responding and continuing.

One of the most important accounts is 'thinking up ideas'. Two examples of items here will suffice:

Things to do with ...

As a teacher, or preferably amongst a group of teachers, ask each colleague (a) to write 'Things to do with ...' at the top of a piece of paper, and (b) to add any word/phrase from everyday life (e.g., timetables, weather, buttons, etc.). In the next 20 minutes, you list as many one-line teaching ideas on each of the pieces of paper started by your colleagues as you can. Thus 10 people will produce 200 - 300 ideas in 20 minutes, about half of which will be useful to any particular ▷

Procedures cont'd

teacher. An example (not necessarily a very inspired one) for 'THINGS TO DO WITH FOOD' might be 'Write an honest menu', or for 'THINGS TO DO WITH POSTCARDS' - 'James Bond's postcard: what secret message is being conveyed in the picture?'

Keywords

Each teacher or trainee (one can do it alone too) writes a keyword in the centre of a piece of paper. Papers should be swapped around until everyone gets a keyword other than their own that they feel they can work with. Each person brainstorms idea-paths leading from the keyword. The last time I did it, this is what I got in 10 minutes or so:

WHAT PARTS OF MY HOUSE DO I RECOGNISE BY SIGHT? SOUND? SMELL?
BELONGINGS
Previous furnishings/ condition
CAN I DESCRIBE ENTERING MY HOUSE TO A BLIND MAN
FITTINGS
FURNITURE
RETURNING TO MY HOUSE AFTER HOLIDAY
ROOM CONTENTS
PREVIOUS OWNERS
WHAT SORT OF HOUSE DO YOU LOVE?
HOW DO HOUSES BECOME PART OF THE FAMILY?
MY HOUSES AT MIDNIGHT/AT 9am
HOUSES
IS IT TRUE THAT ALL GREEK NOVELS ARE ABOUT HOUSES?
HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT MY HOUSE
PICTURE DICTATION
MOVING HOUSE
A HOUSE YOU LIVED IN AS A CHILD
"A room of my own"
WHAT'S EACH SIDE OF THE WINDOW
A FRIEND'S HOUSE
WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A HOUSE
How could a particular house be improved?
THE STREET OUTSIDE
THE WEATHER AND MY HOUSE

TECHNIQUES ACCOUNT

Trainees will need another bank account for techniques. Below I simply list in no particular order a small number of the well known areas in which one can work in an involving way and which disfavour lessons based on models of language. Again, this is very far from an exhaustive list, and serves only to exemplify the idea

matching pictures and language
reducing long messages to telegrams
picture dictation
reconstructing telegrams
stories from sounds
stories from objects
jigsaw reading/listening
video applications
problem solving
communication through image
non-linguistic representation
games
completers
starters
counselling
melodrama
interviews
survey work
questionnaires
horoscopes
newspapers
simulation

Within each of these categories, there are countless particular techniques/activities. For example, with newspapers one might (again not an exhaustive list):

rewrite a story from one paper in the style of another

take a single sentence description of an event and a suite of photographs: write the story, with headlines, subheadings, and appropriate layout

provide half a feature story for completion

the non-story: 'Princess goes shopping', no other information, 200 words for the front page

AIDS - what should the ordinary citizen do?

trivialize a merger story from the financial pages

write a 'Phew what weather!' or 'It's a soaker!' story

invent a readers' competition

write a leader/comment column to accompany a front page story

invent letters to supplement the silly letters page

the agony aunt/a doctor writes etc.

find an animal lovers story and write a pastiche for the next edition

a story to whip up xenophobia

a 'vicar in the bedroom' story

list the ten most influential English people of the day

advice to a figure in the public eye.

And if one looks at the actual newspaper, one will always and immediately get a dozen more and better ideas related to actual texts (a time to use authentic materials).

And then there's an account for symbolic/diagramatic forms for recording language. For example

grids
charts
bar charts
symbols
graphs
set diagrams
tables
maps

flow charts
Osgood semantic scales
boxes to be ticked
paint colour cards etc.

(A good way of collecting ideas is to ask colleagues in other disciplines or friends in other jobs to give you samples of the ▷

tables, charts and diagrams they use in their work.)

So that if I wanted to encourage careful listening, for example, I might list objects or people down one side of the page and properties along the top, and the learners would tick the appropriate box whenever a property was ascribed to a person or object. The Pilgrims activity that invites learners to plot their success graph against their happiness graph is a model of how diagramatic forms can be used, and leads naturally on to work in several different language areas.(7)

DRAWING FROM DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS

This kind of way of thinking seems to me to lead to a more appropriate language teachers' syllabus than a sequenced set of language forms or functions. The input to any classroom activity may be a combination of items drawn from six, eight, ten, a dozen or more different accounts. The forms the activity takes and the shape of the lesson will obviously depend on what a teacher draws from whichever of the accounts (s)he draws on for the group of learners (s)he is working with at the time.

I realise that I haven't been saying anything very new about language teaching in these two articles. On the other hand, even people who teach in the way implied here and who hold to the principles underlying such teaching very often fall back on the 3P's in their teacher training work. These articles are intended to encourage teacher trainers to be bold enough to train good teachers, rather than automatons working within a discredited paradigm. Of course, it's a very incomplete start - many colleagues in the profession will be able to add many other, many better, and many more varied ideas to those first few suggested here.

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WHO READS "THE TEACHER TRAINER"?

Here is a sample list of subscribers:-

The American University of Beirut, Lebanon.
Education Department, Spanish Embassy, London.
Australian Centre for Languages, Sydney, Australia.
Beijing Secondary School, China.
British Council, Jakarta, Indonesia.
EFL Lecturer, College of Commerce, Aberdeen, Scotland.
Lydbury English Centre, Shropshire, England.
Modern Languages Advisors, Ripon, Uxbridge, York and Dumfries.
Teacher Trainers, UK, Brasil, Japan, Poland, Hong Kong, Australia, USA and Austria.
Cambridge University Press.
County Teachers' Centre, Worcester, England.

TWO SHORT TRAINING IDEAS
from Jenny Van der Plank

1) LANGUAGE TERMINOLOGY CARD GAME

Some beginner trainees are not very good on grammatical terms; names of the verb tenses for example. We can teach them this useful professional vocabulary while showing them the workings of a vocabulary game. You need two matchable categories of cards e.g.

Category 1 cards	Category 2 cards
AUXILIARY VERB FOR THE SIMPLE PRESENT	DO/DOES
PRESENT PERFECT ('eat' + she?)	HAS SHE EATEN?
SIMPLE PAST ('go' + he -)	HE DIDN'T GO
SIMPLE PRESENT ('Live' + she + here)	SHE LIVES HERE
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS ('cheat' + he +)	HE HAS BEEN CHEATING
PAST PERFECT ('see' + I + it -)	I HADN'T SEEN IT
AUXILIARY VERB FOR THE SIMPLE FUTURE	SHALL/WILL
"PAST" CONDITIONAL ('buy' + I + it +)	I WOULD HAVE BOUGHT IT
MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS (some examples)	CAN, COULD, MUST, MAY, MIGHT, WILL, SHALL, SHOULD, OUGHT, NEED.
SIMPLE PAST PASSIVE ('see' + he)	HE WAS SEEN

Other categories possible are: "possessive adjectives", "Gerunds", "Uncountables" etc.

About twelve cards of each category will do fine. It is wise to use different colour cards for the two categories. The packs are shuffled separately and then the cards are placed, face down, in two separate rows. Matching cards will thus not often be opposite each other. Players take it in turns to turn up one card from each row. Category one cards should be turned up first. They turn them over again if they are not a matching pair. Everyone tries to remember where cards are so that, when it's their turn, they can try to turn up a pair. If a player gets a pair, they have one more turn. If the game is run a second time, category two cards can be turned up first.

2) COCKNEY SLANG IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

When working with multi-lingual trainees and wanting to demonstrate a learning/teaching technique or method, we are often at a loss for a language to use that is equally unfamiliar to all trainees. One idea is to use Cockney rhyming slang. Here, for example, are the Parts of the Body in Cockney slang:

Parts of the body

Germans	German bands	Hands
Longers	Longers and lingers	Fingers
Darby	Darby Kelly	Belly
Jumping	Jumping Jack	Back
Scotches	Scotch pegs	Legs
Plates	Plates of meat	Feet
Marys	Mary Rose	Toes
Loaf	Loaf of bread	Head
Trunks	Trunks of trees	Knees
Chalk	Chalk Farm	Arm
Gregory	Gregory Peck	Neck
Boat	Boat Race	Face
Barnet	Barnet Fair	Hair
Errol	Errol Flynn	Chin
I suppose	-	Nose
North	North and South	Mouth
Minces	Mince pies	Eyes
Kings	King Lears	Ears
Uncle	Uncle Ned	Head
Hampsteads	Hampstead Heath	Teeth

For those interested in pursuing this idea further, "Fletcher's Book of Rhyming Slang" by Ronnie Barker (Pan Books) will give you the brass tacks (facts) on what comes out of the old north and south (mouth)!

WHAT SORT OF MODERN LANGUAGES TEACHERS DO WE NEED? AN ADVISER'S VIEW

By Guy Richeux

It seems such an arrogant idea, for one person, and perhaps even more so, for an Adviser -whose very existence and title are bound to be resented by those who are sure they know what's what! - to try to define what sort of animal the future language teacher ought to be. Although I represent a Local Education Authority and I am a long standing member of the National Association of Languages Advisers, I can only speak for myself, as I have no authority to do otherwise.

However, if "at the heart of Education lies the child", I shall attempt to place what I have to say within a context in which the consumer is given a prominent place.

If some educationalists think that the days of the grammar translation method have disappeared everywhere and forever, they ought to have an impromptu visit to a number of schools, where, despite concessions being made to the demands of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (G.C.S.E.), the new 16+ examination in England and Wales, the traditional teaching has not changed radically. This is not an oversight or a lack of ability to adopt new strategies, it is simply the conviction that all this new methodology is not sound and sanity will soon return. I am, of course, talking about the more extreme cases here. But, more generally, there is evidence that the new era in Modern Language teaching, namely the constant or at least prevalent use of the foreign language in the classroom, the prominence of communicative skills, the greater emphasis on authenticity, the practice of language rather than the teaching of grammar, has not yet dawned everywhere.

This may sound very pessimistic; realistically it was not envisaged that it could happen overnight, although the rushed introduction of the new 16+ examination hastened the process a little. The rug had been pulled from under feet of those who sheltered behind the cosy old General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.), a very traditional test of grammatical competence in which the topic of communication hardly mattered as long as it was written correctly!

The new teaching methods have yet to be fully operational at Advanced('A') level, though, to be fair, a number of examination boards offer options which are a real progression from the G.C.S.E., instead of the essay/prose/literary critique test at 18+ which the more traditional staff still favour. The result of this hiatus means that a large number of pupils who obtained the new exam in 1988 are now struggling in 'A' level classes conducted as if their experience had been that of previous generations. "They don't know their verbs, they cannot tell an adjective from a noun, how am I expected to take them to the same STANDARDS as in the past?". Those unfortunate youngsters had been led to believe they were good at languages, they gained 'A' grades, they enjoyed learning French, German, etc. One of my children always queried whether things which happened to him were fair. I feel a lot of sixth formers have a right to ask the question, too.

Not that I think that G.C.S.E. is perfect! It is, in fact, a long way from that. In particular, its method of assessment in English has had the inevitable throwback of justifying a greater use of the mothertongue in class than is really necessary. But, warts and all, it is such an improvement! Who knows, in a few years the number of people claiming to have studied French for 5 or more years - "I did French to Ordinary ('O') level, you know ..." - but being quite incapable of uttering 2 words of it, might drop considerably. (I always try to reassure them that they should feel no guilt, but seldom succeed).

So, what can trainers do to help, what are the qualities required of the new generation of teachers? Considering the list I am about to deliver and the state of teachers' salary and status, I have to admit the chances of recruiting one such paragon must be close to nil. But let us just imagine what it would be like to have a new person who spoke at least 2 foreign languages fluently, had spent a good deal of time in countries where the languages are spoken, liked or at least respected foreigners, wanted to present the teaching of the languages within the context of the cultures from where they emerged, a teacher who did not feel it was necessary to group the pupils so that (s)he could always teach all of them but could organise her/himself to provide individual attention, organise pair/group work, let the puils learn rather than insist on teaching them all the time, correct their errors in a sympathetic way (banning red pens), help them to assess and record their progress and in the process try to enthuse most of his/her charges! If this is asking too much, shall we settle for teachers who actually like children AND instil in their pupils a respect for foreigners? These are, after all, central qualities for language teachers. Please forgive me if I give the impression that I am disappointed by language teachers in this country. Of course, some appear to have forgotten what education is about, but THEY ARE BY FAR THE MINORITY. I have a great deal of admiration for most teachers, even those whose methodology surprises me, when I can feel that they relate to their pupils, try to know them as well as possible, rejoice in their success and do not make them feel stupid or inadequate. British teachers have taught me that all this matters and the caring education they provide is second to none that I know. May trainers give us more of the same plus the 'little' extras suggested and the 1990's will be wonderful years to be at school!

Guy Richeux was born and education in France, graduated in English from Rennes University and first came to England in 1963 as a French assistant. He has taught in the Ivory Coast, France and England, has trained and supported non-specialist primary and secondary teachers and is now Modern Languages Adviser for Rotherham.

TEACHERS' GROUPS IN SPAIN

by Leslie Bobb Wolff and Jose Luis Vera

BACKGROUND

Imagine teachers of the same subject matter meeting together regularly to discuss their classroom problems and to look for solutions. Imagine teachers who work in the same area, from the same or different levels, setting themselves objectives and working towards them. Teachers trying out new ideas with their classes, ideas presented to them by fellow teachers, and then coming back to the group of teachers and commenting on how things worked out.

Does this sound idealistic? Impossible? In Spain, for at least the last decade, initially springing up spontaneously in different parts of the country and now, to a certain extent, aided by the Ministry of education or its equivalent in regional governments, the members of teacher groups have been trying to improve the quality of teaching in their classrooms mostly by helping one another, and learning from each other by sharing experiences. There are teachers' groups to be found in almost every subject taught in both elementary and secondary school levels, but the area where there are most teachers working is in the field of English as a Foreign Language.

PUTTING OUR HEADS TOGETHER

During the course of a three-week programme for improving E.F.L. teacher training in Spain, set up by the Spanish Ministry of Education jointly with the U.S. Embassy and held in El Escorial, a group of teachers involved in teachers' groups met to discuss problems and solutions they had found in getting groups started and keeping them going. While most of the difficulties were common to all groups, the solutions offered were often different enough to be contradictory, the contradictions generally due to the different circumstances under which groups in different parts of the country meet. Participants' experience and circumstances vary greatly. Participating in this round table were people who had been working in a group for more than 10 years and people who were thinking of starting one; people working in small cities where everyone is within 10 minutes walking distance from any meeting place and groups whose members live as far as 100 km. apart; groups of teachers all working at the same level and others in which several levels are mixed; groups of only 4 or 5 members and others of 30; groups with official backing and others without any official recognition. One thing that was true for all groups is that no one is paid for either attending or leading a teachers' group; it's all done on a voluntary basis, in the teachers' own time. Any economic aid given is for materials, photocopying, sending letters, and having a place to meet and keep materials and small reference libraries.

METHODS OF WORK DURING OUR SESSION

Our method of work during the Escorial session was the following:

- brainstorming to make a list of all the problems we could think of
- grouping problems by themes
- small group discussion of possible solutions for specific areas
- whole group sharing of solutions found, along with pros and cons of the different suggestions offered

DIFFICULTIES DEFINED: GETTING A GROUP STARTED

The problems were divided into two main blocks:

- how to get a group started
- how to keep a group going.

In the first block we defined the following difficulties:

- getting teachers interested
- deciding frequency and hours of meetings
- attendance
- lack of official recognition.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STARTING A GROUP

- Start with a well-advertised short course with practical sessions offering concrete solutions for classroom problems. Include, at the end, a session for analyzing needs and have the participants fill out a questionnaire on frequency, time and length of future meetings.
- Spend the first meeting defining specific objectives which will be useful for everyone in the group or form smaller groups to cover different objectives.
- Start with a few people and attract new members by word-of-mouth so that the group grows slowly.
- From the first meeting, get into the habit of spending the last hour (for instance, the third if the sessions are two hours long) in a nearby bar where everyone can relax together and have time for gossip and generally getting to know each other.

- For the group organizer or coordinator: be prepared to give quite a lot of input the first year of the group's existence; only after that start the interchange of ideas and long-term objectives.
- Be sure that group members get other information of possible interest to them (e.g. courses offered, materials available, etc.).
- If there are large distances between where group members live and/or work, rotate the meeting place so the same people are not always travelling long distances.
- Programme objectives which are valid for teaching at any primary or secondary level.
- Run the meetings in the language most easily handled by the teachers attending (usually not English).
- Put whatever is developed into written form and keep track of attendance in order to get official backing if the group doesn't have it yet.
- Name one member of the group to be in charge of distributing notes to those who've missed a meeting.
- Set up meetings with a frequency which is feasible for the majority of the group members:
  - Groups whose members live and work near each other (for example, in the same town) tend to want weekly meetings.
  - Groups in which members live and work further apart tend to meet twice a month.
  - Large groups which have subdivided themselves tend to meet in their small groups weekly and as a whole group once or twice a month.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO KEEPING A GROUP GOING

- lack of methodical approach to work
- some people bring ideas, others don't
- after a language improvement course, teachers are not interested in forming a group because they think they only need language improvement
- irregular attendance
- differences of interest among group members (for instance, language improvement vs. methodology)
- participants are afraid of or hesitant about giving opinions
- lack of classroom experiences

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAINTAINING GROUP CONTINUITY

- Set specific objectives that can be achieved in a short period of time, especially at first (i.e. ways of using songs in the classroom).
- To get everyone involved, everyone in the group agrees that ideas heard about during a session will be tried out in class and the results brought back to the next group meeting - each teacher explaining how s/he used this in class.
- Involve everyone with specific tasks. Those members who don't feel they can bring new ideas take other jobs (e.g. making photocopies for the sessions, contacting publishers for catalogues and materials, taking notes during a meeting, giving out materials, preparing what's needed for the following session).
- Have all suggestions brought in written form;
  alternatively, name a secretary for each session to take notes of techniques described/discussed.
- Have someone in charge of finding out about financial aid, in-service courses, etc. which are available.
- Every pedagogical suggestion offered to the group must have been tried out in class previously by the offerer in order to avoid ideas being too theoretical or unworkable and also to avoid the groups' getting a feeling of being overwhelmed by materials.
- Offer the possibility of making copies of tapes and videos.
- Build up a library catering to the needs and/or interests of the group members.
- Give specific articles to all members of the group to be read and commented on at a later date.
- For a group of teachers working at different levels at school find the objectives in common and negotiate an order of priorities.
- Start a small magazine to publish the work done by the group or individual members.
- From one meeting to the next, assign specific tasks to be done.
- As a group, look for solutions to professional difficulties individual group members bring.
- Create a language improvement programme for those teachers who need it.
- Prepare a yearly programme of classroom objectives that is satisfactory for all members of the group, that all can apply and that will provide a common ground to work on from there.
- Maintain contact between groups and group leaders so as to keep moral up.

OTHER PROBLEMS WE DEFINED (WHICH WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GO INTO)

- Separation/Lack of coordination between primary and secondary school teachers
- Disintegration of the group when the coordinator isn't there
- Overburdening of the coordinator
- Teachers don't feel comfortable in the Teachers' Centre because they think their needs are not or will not be met there
- More interest in getting a certificate of attendance than in the interchange of experiences.

▷

Cont'd

THE FOLLOWING TEACHER TRAINERS TOOK PART IN THIS ROUND TABLE SESSION: Marina Fraga (Vigo), Margot Herreras (Castro Urdiales), Jose Luis Vera (Tenerife), Gloria Gutierrez (Avila), Jose Luis Paniego (Zaragoza), Felix Salmones (Santander), Ambrosio Lopez (Asturias), Concha Arribas (Madrid), Maruja Dupla (Zaragoza), Consuelo de la Riva (Madrid), Agustin Garcia Fernandez (Albacete), Bernardo Marin (Madrid), Bartolome Sanz (Alcoy, Alicante), Jaime Blanco (Molina de Segura, Murcia), Leslie Bobb Wolff (alcala de Henares, Madrid).

All of those who participated in this round table session felt that other sessions of this type in the future would be useful in order to share experiences, problems, and a variety of solutions.

AFTERWARDS

Starting from one of the suggestions for how to keep everyone involved, the elementary-school teachers group from the Teachers' Centre in Alcala de Henares spent part of its first two meetings in September listing tasks, which were then distributed among all the members of the group. We've included the list here, thinking it might be useful for other groups. Tasks are:

- maintain contact with the Teachers' Centre concerning information and materials which are received
- take charge of the organization of filing materials developed by the group
- take notes during each meeting
- prepare the agenda for each session
- make photocopies
- get in contact with other groups and with publishers
- write articles for the Teachers' Centre's magazine
- keep group members who miss a meeting well informed
- keep accounts of the groups' money - when there is any from the Teachers' Centre (T.C.) or other sources
- keep a list of the books and materials we'd like to have/have the T.C. buy for us
- keep track that we stay on schedule (especially starting on time)

There are one or two people in charge of each of these tasks.

This article was first published in Aula de ingles magazine in its January 1987 issue (Vol. 6, No.1)

Leslie Bobb Wolff is a secondary school teacher in Alcala de Henares and a teacher trainer in Spain. She has published several textbooks with Tim Hahn.

Jose Luis Vera was the General Coordinator of the teacher training programme for elementary school (11-14) teachers in the Canary Islands when this article was first written. He is now teaching at the University of La Laguna in Tenerife, Canary Islands.

CROSSWORD BY MOG

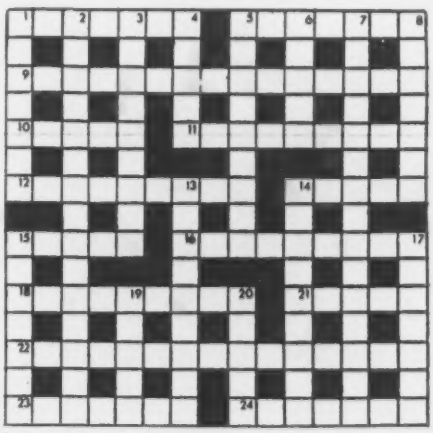
CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

1 Three ac: confused? I could help (7)
5 One who listens and repeats? (7)
9 City house shows faith after siege (10,5)
10 Language used in selling overseas (5)
11 It's devilish to sort out: I can't alas! (9)
12 Shipping Director (9)
14 A man unknown? not in the mind's eye (5)
15 11 ac Centre of Mass (5)
16 Colours for the Princess's strongmen, we hear (9)
18 Webster's class (9)
21 Former spouse has last month to rejoice (5)
22 In which teachers, Bell and Suntory all have a stake (8,7)
23 Quotidian (but not Sat or Sun) (7)
24 Skin concern for girl in test (7)

Down

1 Filters out trivia (7)
2 Hornby customer (8,7)
3 This is odd - no weight shown in the chart (9)
4 Rabbit expert in the Nature Museum (5)
5 The Lady in the Lake (9)
6 Point out climbing gear (5)
7 Its functions are often misunderstood (7,2,6)



8 How physically should one respond? (7)
13 Crazy noise, ugly leaderless mob - how they behave! (9)
14 One known for Caring and Sharing ... on the farm (6,3)
15 Silent Way to permit food intake (7)
17 Content, settled, and is fairly heartless (7)
19 Vietnamese leader and German one followed in the pink (5)
20 Editor up to some good (5)

If you would rather do the same crossword but with easier clues, try the crossword later in the journal.

Poster Presentations ON TEACHER TRAINING COURSES

An Example

On the second day of an eight-week intensive RSA Diploma course I asked each of the 12 participants to choose a different item from a menu of methods and historical phases in the development of ELT. According to their choice I directed them to a particular chapter or extract from one of the following books:

Richards & Rogers: Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching
Larsen-Freeman: Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching
Howatt: A History of English Language Teaching

I asked each of them to produce a poster (A1 size) summarizing what they could glean about their topic as regards:

- historical context
- theory of language
- theory of language learning
- role of the teacher
- role of the students
- role of materials
- anything else which struck them as interesting

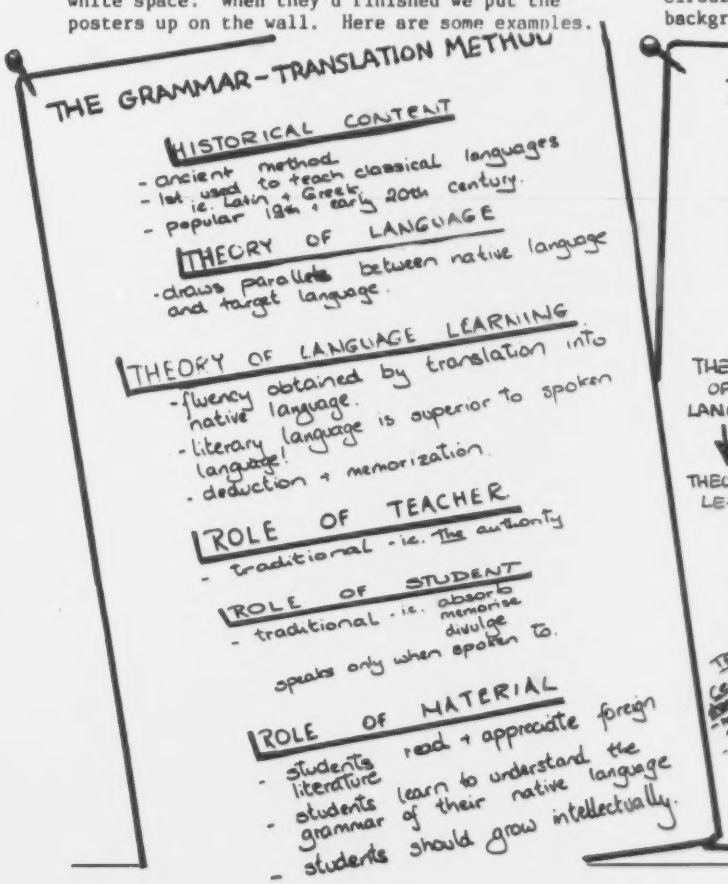
They had about an hour and a half to do this. They were able to spread out and make use of a number of empty rooms. I emphasized that it was OK if the posters contained a lot of white space! When they'd finished we put the posters up on the wall. Here are some examples.

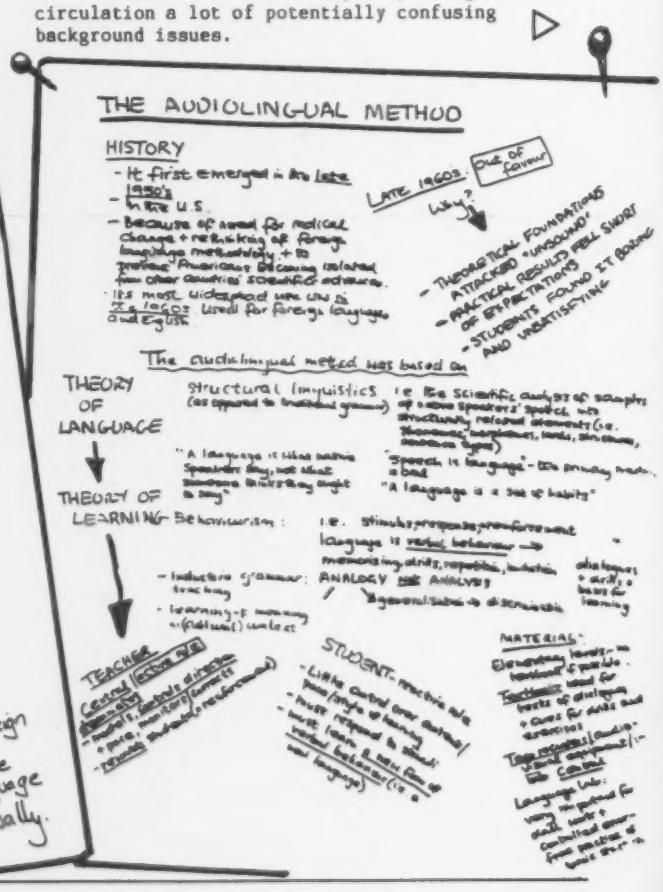
Everyone had a look round, read, and started commenting and asking each other questions. Soon it was time for the session to finish, but the interest and talking generated by the posters carried on and formed a backcloth against which many of the subsequent sessions on the course developed, as well as a framework in which the participants were able to identify their own teaching and learning experiences, prejudices and interests. The content of the posters came to be seen in new perspectives as the course progressed. The posters stayed on the wall for 3 weeks or so, until they were replaced by others, but even after that they continued to be somehow present, visible, and were still referred to by the participants, just as all ideologies and practices associated with all historical phases of ELT are still in some way present in the teaching we do today.

As time went on, a number of the course participants made use of poster presentations in the teaching practice lessons which they taught as part of the course. In this case, the posters were made by the students.

I think the benefits of using posters in the initial seminar session described included the following:

1. It was an efficient way of putting into circulation a lot of potentially confusing background issues.


THE GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD
HISTORICAL CONTEXT
- ancient method
- 1st used to teach classical languages ie. Latin + Greek
- popular 18th + early 20th century.
THEORY OF LANGUAGE
- draws parallels between native language and target language.
THEORY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING
- fluency obtained by translation into native language.
- literary language is superior to spoken language!
- deduction + memorization.
ROLE OF TEACHER
- traditional - ie. The authority
ROLE OF STUDENT
- traditional - ie. absorb memorise divulge
speaks only when spoken to.
ROLE OF MATERIAL
- students read + appreciate foreign literature
- students learn to understand the grammar of their native language
- students should grow intellectually.


THE AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD
HISTORY
- It first emerged in the late 1950's in the U.S.
- because of need for radical change + rethinking of foreign language methodology + to produce Americans becoming isolated from other countries' scientific advances.
- its most widespread use was in the 1960's used for foreign language
LATE 1960s: DUE OF FAVOUR
Why?
- THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS ATTACKED + UNSOUND
- PRACTICAL RESULTS FELL SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS
- STUDENTS FOUND IT BORING AND UNSATISFYING
The audiolingual method was based on
THEORY OF LANGUAGE
Structural linguistics (as opposed to traditional grammar)
i.e. the scientific analysis of samples of native speakers' speech into structurally related elements (i.e. phonemes, morphemes, tones, stress, intonation, pitch)
"A language is what native Speakers say, not what somebody thinks they ought to say"
"Speech is language" - the primary medium
"A language is a set of habits"
THEORY OF LEARNING - Behaviourism: i.e. stimulus, response, reinforcement
language is verbal behaviour
memorizing, drills, repetition, imitation
- inductive grammar teaching
- learning-by-making-mistakes
ANALOGY not ANALYSIS
"Learning is habit formation"
TEACHER
STUDENT
MATERIAL

Cont'd

2. These issues were always ready to hand, set out in a striking way, to be referred to and elaborated as necessary.

3. It was an effective device for promoting academic/professional exchange of information and opinion among the course participants.

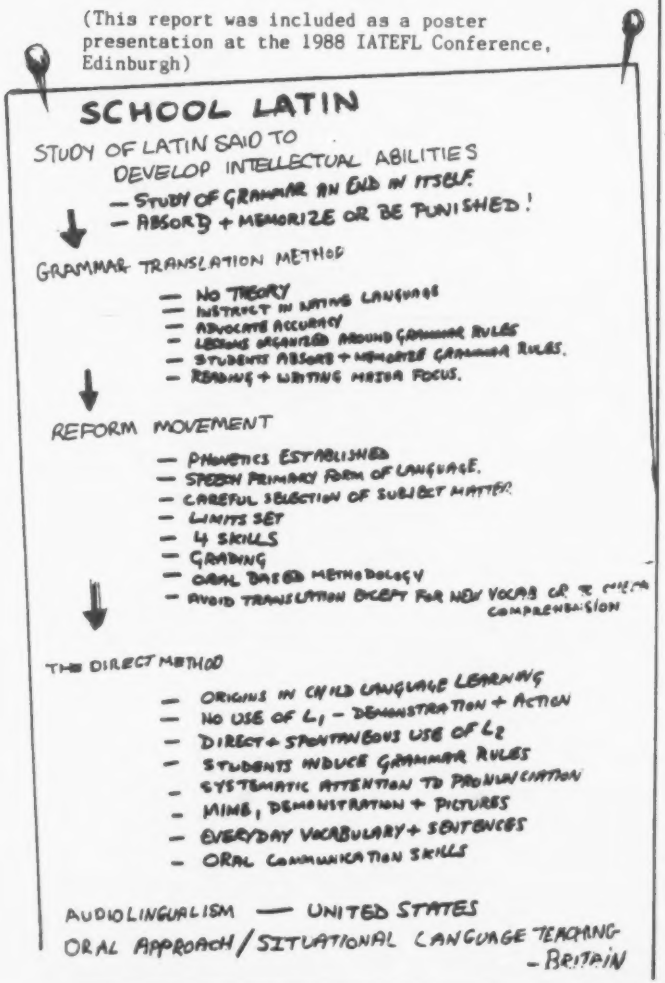
4. It provided a number of models of ways of note-making and note-presentation, including non-linear ones, which usefully supplemented work done during the early stages of the course on aspects of study skills.

5. Although this was not specifically recommended, the same type of procedure was put to effective use by the participants in their teaching. The students in their classes seemed very favourably disposed to working with posters.

The poster session enabled the poster-makers to discover and put across a message to themselves and others, but the medium was part of the message, too.

Jonathan Marks
International House, Hastings.

(This report was included as a poster presentation at the 1988 IATEFL Conference, Edinburgh)


SCHOOL LATIN
STUDY OF LATIN SAID TO DEVELOP INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES
— STUDY OF GRAMMAR AN END IN ITSELF
— ABSORB + MEMORIZE OR BE PUNISHED!
GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD
— NO THEORY
— INSTRUCT IN WRITING LANGUAGE
— ADVOCATE ACCURACY
— LESSONS ORGANISED AROUND GRAMMAR RULES
— STUDENTS ABSORB + MEMORIZE GRAMMAR RULES.
— READING + WRITING MAJOR FOCUS.
REFORM MOVEMENT
— PHONETICS ESTABLISHED
— SPEECH PRIMARY FORM OF LANGUAGE.
— CAREFUL SELECTION OF SUBJECT MATTER
— LIMITS SET
— 4 SKILLS
— GRADING
— ORAL BASED METHODOLOGY
— AVOID TRANSLATION EXCEPT FOR NEW VOCAB OR TO CHECK COMPREHENSION
THE DIRECT METHOD
— ORIGINS IN CHILD LANGUAGE LEARNING
— NO USE OF L1 — DEMONSTRATION + ACTION
— DIRECT + SPONTANEOUS USE OF L2
— STUDENTS INDUCE GRAMMAR RULES
— SYSTEMATIC ATTENTION TO PRONUNCIATION
— MIME, DEMONSTRATION + PICTURES
— EVERYDAY VOCABULARY + SENTENCES
— ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS
AUDIOLINGUALISM — UNITED STATES
ORAL APPROACH / SITUATIONAL LANGUAGE TEACHING — BRITAIN

Trainer Session Plan

WHAT ARE YOUR THEORIES?

Sara Walker

A sequence of activities linking practice to theory in teacher training.

Recent interest in the idea of teacher development has brought with it a welcome examination of the complex relationship between "theory" and "practice". In 'The Teacher Trainer', Vol.2 No.3, Rod Bolitho defends the role of classroom teachers and encourages them "to take a more robust view of their own worth and to increase their self esteem." He suggests a reappraisal of the status of applied linguists and researchers, who might even be perceived as "parasites who depend on the classroom encounter." I suspect that a teacher's self-esteem depends to some degree on being able to keep up with the jargon and the name-dropping of those who would like to blind us with science. But at another level, "theory" has a more valuable part to play.

One very important aspect of "theory" for classroom teachers is that it can provide a relatively systematic framework for the intuitive insights developed through practice. "Theory is implicit in the practice of language teaching. It reveals itself in the assumptions underlying practice, in the planning of a course of study, in the routines of the classroom, in the value judgements about language teaching and in the decisions that the language teacher has to make day by day. A language teacher can express his theoretical conviction through classroom activities as much as (or, indeed, better than) through the opinions he voices in discussions at professional meetings." (Stern: 1983). But teachers may not be fully conscious of their underlying assumptions. Many suffer from covert or overt feelings of inferiority. They could perhaps be compared to the language learner who communicates fluently and even accurately, but claims not to know "grammar". What is needed, in both cases, is the opportunity to rationalise a body of knowledge which is largely intuitive and which is perceived to be unsystematic.

Teacher development work can therefore usefully be concerned with "raising the theoretical awareness of teachers by encouraging them to conceptualise their practices and thus narrow the gap between theory and practice in their everyday lives". (Ramani: 1987).

The following series of three linked activities for teacher development is designed to open up possible self-access lines for teachers who would like to read more, and to help teachers to externalise and evaluate their own theoretical insights. In short, it aims to create self-esteem.

Activity 1 (Lead-in) (5-10 minutes)

The trainer prepares a set of name slips, each containing a name of one of the participants, but not the name s/he is using on the course (i.e. a surname or middle name if the first names are being used, and so on). Participants are each given a name slip, and asked to stand up and circulate until they have found the person whose name they have received. Brief comments are then exchanged on feelings about names, and each participant is invited to state what name s/he will use when famous, and what his/her greatest professional ambition is. After brief feedback from a few volunteers, the trainer moves on to Activity 2.

Activity 2: (Name dropping) (30-45 minutes)

This activity requires a suitable article on ELT, containing a number of famous names. The article should preferably be read in advance, but be available for scanning during the session. The particular article we chose was "From Unity to Diversity: Twenty-Five Years of Language Teaching Methodology" by Diane Larsen Freeman in Forum Vol.xxv, no.4 (October 1987). This article is relatively short, highly readable and has a very comprehensive bibliography. No doubt many other articles could be used just as well, with suitable modifications to the following exercise.

The trainer begins by eliciting the meaning of 'Name dropping', focussing on the snobbery normally involved. After a brief, and hopefully, light-hearted exchange in which participants are invited to drop names - "When I was having lunch with the Minister of Education last week ...", "As my good friend Mario Rinvolucri always says..." and so on, the exercise sheet is handed out. Participants form groups of around four members to locate the famous names in the article and share ides on the contribution of each one to ELT theory.

Exercise sheet for Larsen-Freeman (1987)
(adaptable to other articles)

Scan the article; "from Unity to Diversity .."
(Forum 1987) to find the following names. Then discuss with your group the context in which is mentioned and information about each theorist's contribution to ELT.

James Asher Naom Chomsky Charles Curran

Caleb Gattegno Dell Hymes Keith Johnson

Stephen Krashen Georgi Lozanov Henry Widdowson

David Wilkins

Subsequent feedback in plenary session on the 'famous names' and their contributions to theory should give the better-read teachers a chance to add their own comments, as well as giving the 'novices' in the theoretical areas some idea of which writers they might like to read. Here, the Larsen-Freeman bibliograph proves very helpful.

Activity 3: (What are your theories?)
(minimum: 1 hour)

Participants are divided into three roughly equal groups (A,B, and C) and each member of the group is given a number (A1, A2, A3, A4, etc.). In large TD sessions, the number of groups could well be increased to six, as the discussion groups are best kept relatively small. Each group is then given a set of propositions to discuss. The propositions we used are given here; but the list of topics and the propositions can obviously be lengthened, shortened or modified in any way to suit particular groups of teachers or areas of interest.

Sets of propositions for Groups A, B and C in Activity 3

ELT Theories

Group A: Mark 'Yes' beside propositions you agree with and 'No' beside those you disagree with. Then discuss your ideas with the other members of your group.

1. (Language learning) Language learning is largely a matter of correct habit-formation. Students should listen to correct models and repeat them as much as possible until good habits are formed.

2. (The role of the teacher) The teacher directs the learning process. S/he decides what is taught, when it is taught and how it is taught.

3. (Errors) Students' errors should be prevented as far as possible, and corrected as soon as they occur. If this is not done, bad habits may develop.

4. (Accuracy -v- Fluency) The aim of the course should be accuracy rather than fluency, at least in the early stages of the course. Fluency will look after itself later on.

5. (The role of memory) Conscious memorisation of dialogues and sentence patterns plays an important part in language learning.

6. (Course design) The best way to plan a course is by presenting the language in grammatical (structural) units with a progression from simple forms to more complex ones.

ELT Theories

Group B: Mark 'Yes' beside propositions you agree with and 'No' beside those you disagree with. Then discuss your ideas with the other members of your group.

1. (Language learning) Language learning is a cognitive process. Students should be encouraged to formulate their own rules and then test them experimentally.

2. (The role of the teacher) A motivated student will learn - with, without, or in spite of her/his teacher. ▷

Cont'd

The successful teacher is therefore the one who can motivate the students. Technique is only of secondary importance.

3. (Errors) Student errors are important because they give the teacher valuable feedback on what has not yet been efficiently learnt. They form a useful basis for remedial teaching.

4. (Fluency -v- Accuracy) Different parts of the lesson should have different aims, some attempting to encourage accuracy of form, others fluency of expression.

5. (The role of memory) Conscious memorisation of dialogues or sentence patterns has little part to play in language learning.

6. (Course design) Teaching programmes can be based on the functions of English (requesting, offering, apologising, etc.). Just as effectively as on a grammatical progression from simple forms to more complex ones.

ELT Theories

Group C: Mark 'Yes' beside propositions you agree with and 'No' beside those you disagree with. Then discuss your ideas with the other members of your group.

1. (Language learning) Since each language has a system of rules, these rules might as well be taught first, before students are asked to apply them.

2. (The role of the teacher) The teacher should adopt different roles in different parts of the lesson or the course. Sometimes s/he will direct the proceedings in class, sometimes take part as an equal and sometimes play other roles, such as impartial observer.

3. (Errors) Students should be encouraged to take risks and experiment with new language. Errors should therefore be treated with tolerance, perhaps even positively encouraged.

4. (Fluency -v- Accuracy) Since fluency is more important than accuracy in most real-life situations, it should also take precedence over accuracy in the classroom.

5. (The role of memory) Memorisation can play an important part in language learning, but some students will find it difficult and demotivating, it should therefore be used with care.

6. (Course design) The most practical course design will be situational - combining structures (grammatical points) and functions (requesting, offering, apologising etc.) within situations where lexis (vocabulary) will also be treated systematically.

Exploitation

When each group have had a reasonable time to work through their set of propositions, new groups of 3 are formed with one member from each of the previous groups (A1, B1 and C1, and so on.). Each new group is then asked to form a single proposition on each topic, either by accepting one of the original statements or by combining elements from several sources. All three propositions may be rejected, too, in favour of a completely new idea. In a small TD group, and if time allows, plenary discussion of the new propositions can take place. Otherwise, group statements can be posted on a noticeboard for everyone to read.

Conclusion

An interesting feature of Activity 3 is that it allows different generations of teachers to negotiate the underlying assumptions of the framework for the practical techniques they have been trained to use. In our experience, this has not led to an outright rejection of the 'audio-lingual' propositions provided for Group A, but rather to a process of sensitive modification.

The last words of this TD session can be given to Ms. Larsen-Freeman, whose article provided the basis for the activities:

"While having no one correct way to teach English may be confusing, even frustrating, it also allows teachers the freedom to be creative and to continue to grow and develop in their profession. As we grow, we do so with the motivation that we can increasingly make better choices, informed by our experience as well as by science. The choices become better where they provide our students with increased access to English and to aspects of themselves they would otherwise be denied."

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEND SOMETHING IN TO "THE TEACHER TRAINER"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. It's easier for us if the written pieces are typed up with double spacing and 49 characters a line. The style should be simple and readable and the normal length of articles is about 1000 to 2000 words. We can serialise if necessary but this will delay publication considerably!

NEWS

The Malkemes Prize was established in memory of Fred W. Malkemes, a member of the faculty of New York University's American Language Institute. The sponsors of the prize of $1,000 seek articles on topics including: language teacher education, adult literacy, CALL, and developing materials for use in ESOL classrooms for beginning students.

The prize is awarded for an article in English, already published in the 2 years preceding the submission deadline. One person can submit one or more of her/his own or other people's articles. In a cover letter which includes the name(s) of the author(s) and the date and place of publication, please state briefly which special feature of the article, in your opinion, makes it outstanding and appropriate for the Malkemes Prize.

Send the letter plus 6 copies of each article to:

The Malkemes Prize,
The American Language Institute,
1 Washington Square North,
New York,
NY 1003,
USA.

Submissions must be posted no later than November 1st.

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NB the January course is a 3-day course, the others are two days.

Dates:	Fees:
7th/8th November 1989	£70.00 plus V.A.T.
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Observation and Feedback

THE CASE FOR DELAYED FEEDBACK AFTER TEACHING PRACTICE AND OBSERVATION

One of the most pressing concerns for any teacher trainer involved in observing and super-vising the teaching practice of trainees, whether at an initial or more advanced level, is the feedback session itself. Clearly we would all agree on encouraging self-criticism and self-awareness in the trainee and that our conduct as teacher trainers in the feedback session is inextricably linked to our inter-personal skills of counselling and personal supervision. If we are to encourage our trainees to give adequate thought to their own evaluation of their lesson we would be well advised to consider delaying this feedback until either later in the same day or even the following day. While it is no doubt true that trainees are anxious to know how their TP Supervisor views their lesson, there is a strong case to be made out for allowing a process of mature, reflective judgement to take place. This needs time and it has often been my experience that trainees who have feedback delayed in this fashion are better able to perceive their lesson not only in its entirety but also within the context of other lessons that were given during the same morning or afternoon by other trainees. Comment very often is more constructive and insights are clearer. More than once a trainee in delayed feedback has noted that they see their lesson in a different light compared to their immediate response after TP. There is not the rush to judgement that characterises a feedback session held at the end of what may well turn out to be a very long day. Instead, the trainee is asked to consider over-night whether she/he has not only achieved the teaching aim of the lesson but also what she/he has achieved on a personal level. Some-times it may be necessary for the TP Supervisor to pose a few questions for the trainee to reflect on, e.g. balance of activities; staging; unanticipated problems; student participation; adequate controlled practice and concept checking etc. These questions should not be meant to focus only on those parts of the lesson seen by the supervisor as problems. Trainees should not feel that these are loaded questions indicating only areas of weakness. A question may well be posed to get the trainee to consider a particular micro-teaching skill which in practice she/he has improved on. In this way the trainee is given some guidance in her/his post-lesson evaluation. This process should also include those trainees who did not teach but who were given observation tasks set either by the teaching trainee(s) or supervisor.

I believe that a further benefit resulting from delayed feedback lies in the nature of the focus on their lessons by trainees. The more constructive comment mentioned earlier manifests itself in global observations on the lesson as a whole, eschewing the narrower point-by-point, stage-by-stage criticisms that tend to be chronological but not wholly evaluative. Delayed feedback therefore gives the trainee the opportunity to come to a maturer, more balanced appraisal of the lesson and rejects the notion of instant judgement as a basis for TP feedback. We implemented delayed feedback on our RSA Certificate courses at International Teaching and Training Centre a few years ago, not without a certain reservation, it must be admitted, but our view now is that it does constitute a more productive and altogether happier procedure for teacher training and development.

Richard Denman,
Director,
International Teaching and Training Centre,
Bournemouth.

CROSSWORD BY MOG

PLAIN CLUES

Across

1 Learning consultant (7)
5 Plagiarist (7)
9 Finance house (10,5)
10 Language, especially when not understood (5)
11 Devilish (9)
12 Navigator (9)
14 OUP series editor (5)
15 Focus of a witch hunt (5)
16 Indigo, madder, etc. (9)
18 Spiders etc. (9)
21 Triumph (5)
22 ARELS et al (8,7)
23 Mon-Fri (7)
24 Place where leather is treated (7)

Down

1 Mere nothings (7)
2 CPE student, for example (8,7)
3 Bar chart (9)
4 Co-founder of Rome (5)
5 Bodensee (9)
6 Spike used by mountaineers (5)
7 International organisation (7,2,6)
8 Without exception (7)
13 Wildly, like Hardy's crowd (9)
14 Farmyard parent (6,3)
15 Migratory, insect-eating bird (7)
17 Provide sufficiency for (7)
19 Dog (5)
20 Something worth having (5)

This is the easy version of the crossword in the earlier part of the journal.

Meet A Colleague

Natalie Hess is a travelling trainer in Israel.

Ed. Where do you work Natalie?

N.H. I work in the Centre for Teaching Improvement at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.

Ed. Lovely name!

N.H. Well, they thought of changing it to "CAQE" - the Centre for Quality Education but it didn't go over well!

Ed. That would sound too much like "QUAKE"! (Laughter)

N.H. Right! Now, what we do is go all over the country and give workshops. People have workshops once every two weeks in their school. It's supported by the University, by the Ministry of Education and by the schools themselves. We travel in teams of two. The furthest point is about an hour away by plane.

Ed. Oh, so you fly everywhere?

N.H. They fly us only to far points like Eilat in the south and Kyriat Shmone in the north. Other than that we go by bus. Israel is a very small country. One feels very much like a business executive when flown to your destination! It's one of the perks. Usually we go in the morning and come back late in the afternoon. But at the far points we stay overnight, go just once a month and give two workshops in a row. We also have workshops for Principals and in Druze villages and Arab villages and Jewish/Arab mixed workshops. The interesting thing about it is that we work with teachers of <u>all</u> subjects English, History, Maths and Principals of all schools, elementary, secondary, all levels. What we've discovered is that we really all have a lot in common. We have the "school culture" in common and, so much of the work, for example, leading a discussion, explaining things, starting and finishing a lesson, using the blackboard, building a resource centre, making lessons interesting - all these things, we have in common so we can work a great deal even though coming from different angles. We've found that the English teachers are the most willing and the most co-operative, interestingly, and I suppose that's because you can do almost anything in an English classroom. Any subject matter is OK. Any kind of group activity is OK. But most teachers today are interested in group work, in being more open and communicative. We find this pretty much across the board, in all subjects.

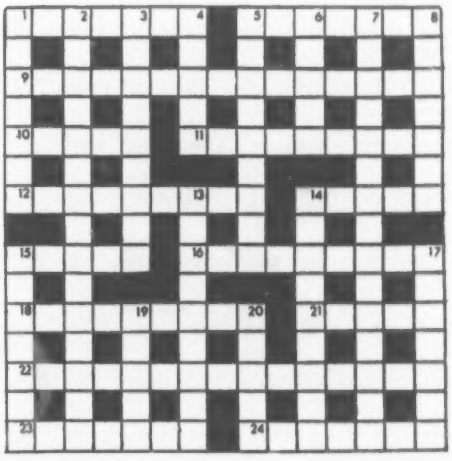
Ed. What's your role on the visits?

N.H. We don't come as "experts", we come as "facilitaters". We start people off and then they help themselves. They are their own experts. This is done very practically. For example, we have a "request corner". People write requests for advice on difficult classroom situations, on slips of paper. We pool the slips. Then we pick about three of the ones we consider most interesting. People sit in groups with one request and try to figure out solutions to it. Then solutions are offered. People go and try them out and see if they fit. We have reports at the next workshop on how they worked out.

Ed. Do the participants meet each other between your visits?

N.H. Yes, because we are visiting teams of teachers in their own schools so they definitely do meet each other. We assign them things to do together. For example, if one of the requests in the request corner was "we want our s's to be more independent" and some of the solutions offered by the group were "start individual projects", "organise the library so the kids can work on their own", "delegate authority to kids to organise school outings, to keep discipline in the hallways or to decorate the school, or to arrange for a Parent/Student evening". Then they do that and the next visit we hear the report of how it's all gone.

Ed. Are we talking about privileged schools here? ▷



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N.H. No, certainly not! The average class size is 40! We try to create a team-teaching spirit so that teachers can walk into each other's classrooms and help each other.

Ed. Is there resistance to the idea?

N.H. Yes. It takes a lot of non-threatening, supportive work. It's not easy. When we come to a school, these people know each other inside out. They know exactly what the other guy is thinking. We don't, but they do! So they don't always take each other seriously. Things can be threatening for them when we don't even know they're threatening.

Ed. Do you have different hierarchical levels present? I mean bosses and teachers?

N.H. Well. We started out by saying that the Principal of the school was never allowed in and we've stuck to that 80% of the time. But in some schools the Principal absolutely insists! So, there we have no choice. After all, he's the boss of the school. Sometimes, he's helpful. Sometimes, by behaving really as a member of the workshop, the teachers grow more comfortable with their Principal, but this isn't always so. There have been workshops wrecked by the presence of the Principal. Sometimes there are senior teachers present in the workshop and we're not even aware of it. It will take us a while to find out.

Ed. Do you have any off-site workshops?

N.H. Yes, we have some at the University. These are much easier to handle. People come from all over. They don't know each other. They can hide what they want and expose what they want. In a way these workshops are more pleasant. In a way they're probably not nearly as effective. They don't work on immediate problems. They don't change the atmosphere of a school. When we travel out, I've often had the feeling that we've really been able to change the atmosphere of a school. We can offer suggestions such as having a bulletin board where teachers can put up ideas that have gone well. You know, teachers are thirsting for comments and recognition from their colleagues. We get them to interview each other as fellow professionals, as if they were strangers, to get to know each other better. We also have one little gimmick that works nicely in a long-term staff. It's called "Member of the Week". Each time we visit we put the spotlight on someone else to talk about themselves. No questions are asked. The teachers can choose what they want to say. One teacher will talk about how she met her husband. Someone else will say how she became a teacher, or her hobby or her lifestory from birth to now! Some talk for five minutes and some for ages!

Ed. Any other ideas for building a group or team spirit?

N.H. Yes. This one works for the classroom or the staffroom. It's called, "I'm a camera". You tell them to close their eyes and run an internal video. Tell them to see themselves walking around the faculty room (staffroom) doing what they normally do there ..... having a cup of coffee, marking papers, whatever ..... Now they let the camera drift around the room. Who does the camera see? Then ask them to focus the camera on someone they really know. Take a good look at that person. What are they doing? Click! Take a picture! Then they turn to the person next to them and tell them about the person they "saw" and say why they really feel they know this person. Then ..... focus the camera again. Let it roam. This time focus on someone who's in the shadows. You don't know this person very well. Think about why you don't know them. Are they not forthcoming? Haven't you had the time? Then turn to your neighbour and talk about this. Could your neighbour tell you ways of getting to know the one in the shadows?

Ed. Nice! What about staffrooms where there is out and out antagonism?

N.H. Well. There are no easy answers. It happens very gradually, starting with technical things like how to open a lesson, how to set goals, etc. Then with the sharing and interaction on these things ..... after a while .....

Ed. Does it help here to be an "outsider" to the school?

N.H. Definitely.

Ed. Have you had times when the school staff has sort of "ganged up" on the "outsider"?

N.H. Yes! Twice. Two of the most depressing experiences of my life! I mean mostly the feedback from our workshops is really great, very warm. We get invited back for a second year and then you can really go into depth. That's another 20 or so, three hour workshops! The breaks are nice by the way. We bring food the first time we visit and then after that they do the breaks. Some workshops have been dreadful except for the gastronomic aspects! Sometimes it turns into a cooking competition with recipes shared. Sometimes you're lucky if you get dry biscuits!

Ed. What about those disasters you mentioned?

N.H. Well, one series of workshops was ordered by the Principal and the teachers had to go. From the start, it was a total disaster. It was inconvenient hours for them. They just wouldn't listen to us. We were "The Principal's People" and there was nothing we could do. We tried three times and then we just gave up.

Ed. How did you feel?

N.H. Well. It's very crushing, very humiliating. Sad. Another time, a head of department ordered the workshops. It didn't work very well from the start but then she got very ill and died. Then, of course, they simply didn't want to and we left. So those were two real failures.

But then we've had about 80 or 90 workshops that have gone very well. We do workshops on "Teacher stress" too - how to prevent teacher burn-out, how to forget a bad lesson, ... you know the sort of thing,... that it isn't always your fault, some things are administration-created, that a bad lesson is just that - one bad lesson. It may be a disaster for you but the students have probably had seven other lessons that day and your lesson is really not very meaningful to them! You know teachers! If things go well, they don't praise themselves. They think "That's the way it should be!" But if things go badly, they're on the brink of hell! Easy to talk about this. Difficult to do. But you do learn to do it! Go back to the next lesson fresh. Never scratch old wounds!

I've been doing workshops now for about eight years. While I was teaching high school, until two years ago, my Principal would co-operate with me and I would always have Tuesdays off to do the workshops. For the past two years I've just been doing teacher training at the University. But when I go back I'll try to do some High School teaching again because I really miss it. And also I feel no-one has the right to be a teacher trainer without also being a teacher.

T+TT+TTT = A CROWDED CLASSROOM!

First of all, let me explain the algebra:

T = Tutor TT = Trainee-Teacher TTT = Trainee Teacher-Trainer

Such were the abbreviations used by many of us taking part in this year's Teaching Practice in Madrid organised by the E.S.O.L. Department of the Institute of Education, London University. For three decades the Department has maintained close links with Madrid Secondary Schools and has based one of the P.G.C.E. (ESOL) teaching practices there. In recent years, the PGCE's have been accompanied not only by their tutors but also by the Department's M.A. students who are specialising in Teacher Training.

I was one of the M.A. students who contributed to the crowded classrooms in Madrid in February this year. We were in the perhaps enviable position of neither having to be observed and assessed as teacher trainees, as were the PGCE's, nor of having the tutors' responsibility of guiding and assessing their students. We were there simply to **observe**, and definitely not to pass judgement on what went on in the classroom, but simply to experiment with 13 different classroom observation instruments.

For some of the group of T.T.T.'s, particularly those who had already had some experience in teacher training, the role was an uncomfortable and seemingly undemanding one - neither one thing nor the other. But for others it was a welcome opportunity to watch the development of a group of teacher trainees on teaching practice and at the same time to watch how their tutors handled the situation.

Recently, a couple of months after the T.P., I asked the tutors and some of the P.G.C.E.'s to look back on the teaching practice and note down any thoughts, particularly about its '5-tiered' nature (T + TT + TTT + Spanish teachers + pupils) and the working relationships it produced. One of the Spanish teachers also sent me some comments - mostly positive - written by her pupils about the experience of having a British student teacher plus entourage in their class for five weeks. After reading all these comments and having written part of my dissertation on attitudes to teaching practice, a few ideas seem worthy of sharing with the readership of 'The Teacher Trainer' in the hope that they may provoke some thought, letters, or further articles.

On 'Performance' in the classroom

Have you ever observed or, indeed, taken part in a lesson which seemed more like a performance by the teacher than a learning experience for the students? Probably we all indulge in performing to some extent, particularly with a new class, one that we are trying to 'win over' or when we are being observed and want to impress the observer, as on a teaching practice. Indeed, outside the teaching situation, for ▷

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example at a party or when meeting people for the first time, an element of performance seems to be inevitable.

On the Madrid T.P. I was very conscious of the 'performance' element of some of the lessons I observed. The lessons I observed without the tutor or video camera present, where the T.T. had relaxed with the class and was totally used to my presence, were so different from the 'performances'. The T.T. actually interacted with her learners instead of just going step by step through the lesson plan as if it were a matter of life and death. (See Malamah-Thomas 1987: 6,7)

Obviously on a short T.P. it is difficult to get to know the classes very well but for many of us in long-term teaching situations it is possible to do this and to build up our confidence so that we can really be ourselves with a class and have no need for performing in front of our students. What goes on in the class can depend on how teacher and students feel, lesson plans can be modified or abandoned as appropriate, pace slackened or increased depending on the atmosphere in the class, the weather, time of day etc. Yesterday evening I went into a class that I've been teaching for several months and told them how fed up I was because I'd just had a massive bill for repairs on my car. Sympathetic conversation (and, moreover, 'genuine communication' (see Willis 1981)) ensued, and by the time I'd heard everyone else's tales of woe I felt much better and could 'get down to work' more positively and without thinking about the bill. Of course this can only be done with a class one knows well and even then only if it 'feels right'. One wouldn't like to incur the wrath of the "I've paid good money for this lesson" type of student! Ideally the students should feel they can do the same if there is something important - good or bad - they would like to tell the class before starting the lesson. Going back to yesterday's class, though, if there had been an observer in the classroom, I would almost certainly have plunged straight into the lesson with a heavy heart and either not concentrated or else put on a mask and 'performed' as best I could.

On experimentation and assessment

Gowers and Walters in their Teaching Practice Handbook (1983:6) advise the trainee teachers,

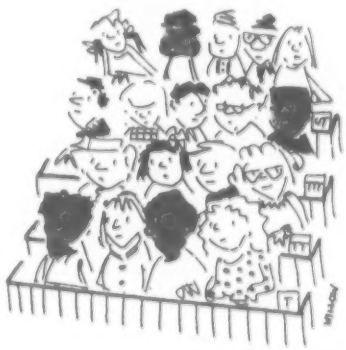
> "Don't worry about always showing your good sides. Think of T.P. as PRACTICE."

The Institute of Education's Teaching Practice Handbook for Madrid 1988 tells the PGCE's,

> "While it is true that there will be a formal assessment made of practical teaching ability at the end of the practice, the main purpose, for both students and tutors, will be to enable you to develop teaching strategies which are effective for your students ..... you should be able to experiment, evaluate and prepare your work more carefully than is normally possible. The T.P. should be regarded as a learning situation, building on the work you have been engaged in hitherto." (p.18)

All very fair and clearly expressed, you may think. But what actually happened in Madrid was that the PGCE's didn't want to experiment if they thought they were being observed because of the real possibility of what one of them termed 'public failure'. To complicate matters, several of the T.T.'s perceived a disparity in the views of their tutors - a confusing feeling of 'serving two masters', I was told. The tutors believe it is inevitable that they should hold different views on different matters. They feel it is up to the PGCE's, as would-be professionals, to work out their own views. The fact still remains though that the T.T.'s see the role of the tutors primarily as that of assessors, and this may well negate or at least reduce the effectiveness of the tutors' role as advisors and helpers. We, as non-assessing observers, certainly found it gratifying, (despite warnings that we shouldn't be prescriptive because of one or two near-disasters in previous years) when the T.T.'s asked our advice, occasionally coming to the back of the classroom during an activity to check on some point. (Incidentally, the immediacy of the advice that we were sometimes able to give reminded me of the RAF project, discussed by Peter Tomlinson in 'The Teacher Trainer' Vol. 2, No. 1).

Several PGCE's I spoke to said they often learnt more from us and the Spanish teachers than from the tutors who were assessing them. John Norrish, the tutor to the M.A.'s, and therefore also a "non-assessor" to the PGCE's, was sometimes welcomed by TT's into classes albeit with comments like "One more won't make any difference."



There seems, then, to be a counter-productive relationship between assessment and experimentation which may have a detrimental effect on TT's and their classes, not to mention the relationship between tutors and tutees. TT's seem to find it hard - or impossible - to believe that they are being assessed not on the basis of 'successful' or 'disastrous' lessons but on approaches and attitudes to the teaching situation and on how much they can develop as professionals. Ken Cripwell,

one of the tutors on the Madrid T.P. experimented with a possible way of alleviating the problem .....

On videoing lessons on T.P.

Ken took a video camera and a technician to Madrid. He didn't go into the TT's classrooms for the first week of the T.P., but allowed them to 'settle down' and get to know their classes. During the second week, he asked the technician to start work, videoing both TT's and pupils. The videos would then be viewed and discussed in small groups later.

Using the videos as a record of what had actually happened, rather than just giving his interpretation of the lesson, Ken felt he had a lot more credibility and that the TT's learnt how to judge their own strengths and weaknesses, rather than just having a tutor point them out. While the videoing was going on, Ken was able to spend some time away from the classroom looking at the TT's lesson plan and T.P. file before seeing how the theory was put into practice when the video was viewed.

Most TT's reported that they found the videoing far less daunting than they had expected. One of the more successful aspects of the experiment was watching the videos again, back in London, a few weeks after the T.P. Then, Ken says, the TT's really got to grips with the issues at hand and would discuss, for example, teaching vocabulary or communicative activities in the light of their practical experience and their reading. In Madrid, the issues which arose from the videos had seemed to get narrowed down by the TT's to how to get through each lesson and how not to 'fail' the T.P.

On Individualisation

Not everybody liked Ken's approach, of course. There were cries of "He never comes to see me" and "Why won't he tell us how to do it?" Some TT's hated watching the videos in groups and would have preferred to do it on an individual basis. Some of the TT's begged us, the TTT's, to give them our opinions of their lessons, while others preferred a descriptive account from our observation instruments to evaluate themselves. Some would ask us to look out for and comment on certain aspects of their lessons. Others were too concerned with 'survival' to be so critical. Some TT's appreciated being left alone for the first week, while others would have liked more guidance right from the start.

Obviously, as with language learning, different people prefer different approaches. And as with language teaching, it is often not possible to please all of the people all of the time; certain demands have to be made of the group as a whole which will please some members more than others. But with the observation of teachers on T.P. or in other circumstances, it seems to me that there is room for individualisation; some negotiation of approach, explanation of expectations, evaluation and feedback. The Madrid Teaching Practice taught me that we can learn a lot from observing and from being observed but we should not forget that it is a sensitive issue and, as such, should be handled with sensitivity.

For their comments on the Madrid T.P. 1988, thanks to:

Mercedez Poni Romero, Ken Cripwell, John Norrish, Anita Pincas, Ruth Hansford, Stephanie Stuart and Katy Smith.

Kate Pearce

Background Reading

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JOURNAL EXCHANGES

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

Aula de Ingles	(Spain)
IATEFL Newsletter	(UK)
English Language Teaching Journal	(UK)
Cross Currents	(Japan)
English Teachers' Journal	(Israel)
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The Portuguese Newsletter	(Portugal)
Forum	(USA)
Practical English Teaching	(UK)
Focus on English	(India)
TESOL Newsletter	(USA)

INTERVIEW

Dr. N.S. Prabhu is interviewed by Alan Maley

A.M. Well Prabhu, it's very nice of you to agree to give this interview to 'The Teacher Trainer' and nice to have you back in Cambridge.

N.S.P. Thank you.

A.M. Can I ask you, what have been the most significant events in your own teaching life?

N.S.P. Early in my ELT career I stumbled on Harold Palmer's, "Principles of Language Study". It's a very small book. I really was greatly moved by what I thought was a pedagogic sense of intuition and excitement in that book. It's a book I've read again and again since then. The other thing was Chomsky's, "Syntactic Structures". It's equally small! These two books had a great influence on me. In a way, I've been trying to make sense of language teaching in a way that is in harmony with those two views. Other than that, it's been actual teacher training that I have learnt a great deal from. And from 1979-1984, every day teaching on the Bangalore project was a real stimulus to thinking.

A.M. From my own knowledge of you, I know that trying out ideas on people and getting a response, even if it's disagreement, has always been very important to you.

N.S.P. Yes, I see professional progress in those terms. I think that's the source of growth for the profession; the growth of ideas in different people and the development of these together, the influencing of one another, gradually, imperceptibly.

A.M. If we can just pass on to the "Bangalore Project" as it's popularly known. What would you say were the defining features of that project? What made it different from other classroom research projects (of which admittedly there had been very few until then)?

N.S.P. I think it came, at least in Southern India, at a time when there was a wearing off of people's belief in the structural approach. There was a kind of psychological readiness. In my own mind, the idea that grammatical competence might best be provided through a preoccupation with meaning took shape suddenly as a result of earlier tentative thinking. I saw it as taking Harold Palmer's thinking a step further.

Because of the psychological readiness, a few people in the project said, "Why don't we go ahead and do it in the classroom?" And also it seemed a good way of stimulating professional discussion in the light of actual teaching and evidence about teaching made available to people - rather than going on with seminars etc. So, it was one way of getting professional discussion going and making it more meaningful.

A.M. Was it ever your feeling that the pilot project could be generalised to national or state level?

N.S.P. I suppose when we started I would have said "Yes!" but I'd also have said that we wanted to work on it for a while before we could say it was something that deserved to be done on a larger scale. And indeed, within the first year it became clear that the model (of piloting followed by large scale implementation) wasn't going to do justice to the project. It was thought best to influence teachers and then teaching gradually.

A.M. I know you've always been somewhat sceptical of large scale implementation of other people's ideas, partly because the originators' understanding and experience aren't there.

N.S.P. Yes, and in fact the implementation of the structural approach in India shows that. It became a fixed set of procedures which teachers carried out with no sense of involvement, and in some cases actually with a sense of resentment. I can't think of that kind of teaching being beneficial to learning, whatever the method.

A.M. Could we pass on to your present work in Singapore at the National University? Are you doing any work there similar to the work in South India?

N.S.P. Not really. I don't think it would be easy at all in Singapore. First of all the education system is much more effectively controlled than in India. Secondly, wanting to try out a new method would imply that the methods already being followed in the schools are less than good. In Singapore, there are these sensibilities. Being an expatriate I don't think I'll be able to attempt anything like trying out a new method. Probably there'd be more controversy than productive work. So my teaching is confined to Post Graduate Courses, electives in Applied Linguistics for students majoring in English on Honours or M.A. courses.

A.M. But you do still have a number of things that concern you deeply about the processes of language learning and training teachers?

N.S.P. I'm thinking more and more about what it means for a teacher to work with some understanding of how the teaching leads to learning, with some concept that has credibility to the teacher himself. Also, about what it means for the teacher to be influenced by other concepts and how ideas change. To the extent that we can understand this, we can look for ways to clarify and facilitate the process.

What I want to do when I get back to India is keep an open house for any teacher who wants to walk in and talk about teaching. It doesn't matter if it's only two or four teachers. I want to try to get the teachers to state on paper what they've said. Trying to write clarifies things. It straightens one's thinking. It reveals and develops new thoughts. This is the 'process writing' philosophy. So, a small number of teachers trying to state their perceptions, and then other teachers trying to state their perceptions but taking in the perceptions of the first group - this can not only help those teachers immediately but it can also reveal to us some of the processes by which teachers' perceptions work and form. Perhaps there's room for something like a journal - not in the sense of learned articles - but of teachers' statements circulated to other interested teachers.

A.M. In a sort of networking mode?

N.S.P. Yes.

A.M. What you've been talking about, you've given a label to, namely " a sense of plausibility"?

N.S.P. Yes. I think in teaching, as in any human interaction activity, one needs to work with some understanding, some concept of what is going on. In teaching, ... how the act of teaching might lead to the act of learning. That conceptualisation of intentions and effects and so on is "a sense of plausibility". I call it that because I don't want to make any claims about it's being the truth. For that teacher however, it is the truth! There is a very real sense in which our understanding of a phenomenon at any one time is the truth for us.

There is also in teaching, as in other recurrent interactions, a need for routinisation. But if the job becomes over-routinised, there is no sense of plausibility engaged. The "sense of plausibility" gets buried or frozen or ossified. From that point of view, the aim of professional activity should be to keep the teachers sense of plausibility alive and therefore open to influence by the on-going experience of teaching and interaction with other teachers' perceptions and senses of plausibility. I think that is the process of teacher development. There has to be some measure of routinisation but there needs to be some room for something being at stake, some scope for satisfaction and dissatisfaction, so that something is learned from the act of teaching.

A.M. Is there anything you'd like to say about teacher training in connection with the Bangalore Project?

N.S.P. We did surprisingly little teacher training on the project actually. Initially it was a group of about five people who had participated in the seminars and discussions leading to the project. In the first year we tried out different kinds of lessons jointly so they were a part of the evolution of the teaching procedure. About 12 teachers came to the project in subsequent years. Mostly they had attended the Annual Review seminar, got interested and offered to join the project. The seminar gave them some idea of the philosophy, and as for the practice, all they did was watch the teaching of other people in the project for about two weeks, teach a couple of lessons, watched and commented on by one of the existing members of the project and after that they went ahead and taught.

A.M. It seems to be based on a "sitting with Nellie" model. You watch other ▷

people doing it, you do it yourself and reflect on what you've done and discuss it.

N.S.P. Yes, and thereafter you learn in the process of doing it yourself. But, these were people who found themselves interested in the project and volunteered, so that possibly makes a difference. There was one teacher, or trainer actually, who was drafted onto the project. He tried for four or five months but I don't think he ever understood what was going on.

A.M. We're doing this interview for 'The Teacher Trainer', a journal which is a little bit along the lines of the newsletter you were mentioning. The aim is an exchange of an informal kind between teacher trainers. Would you have any message for teacher trainers? Any perceptions you'd like to share with them?

N.S.P. I think the problem in teacher training is finding a way of influencing teachers' thinking without seeking to replace their existing perceptions. Teachers ought to be able to interact with ideas from outside and those ideas have to be available to them and, in fact, to be put forcefully so as to give them full value. But how to do this without psychologically intimidating or cowing down teachers or demanding acceptance of the ideas is, I think, the problem of teacher training. It's giving value to what teachers think but giving value too to the ideas one puts to teachers.

A.M. Thank you very much. That's very interesting.

Reference

Prabhu, N.S. (1987) Second Language Pedagogy O.U.P.

Have You Read...?

John Fanselow set out the background to his book 'Breaking Rules' in our 'Author's Corner' series (Volume 3, Number 2). Below Mario Rinvolucri gives a reader's point of view. This system of author explanation followed by reader reaction gives, we feel, a balanced and fair picture of an author's work.

BREAKING RULES - GENERATING AND EXPLORING ALTERNATIVES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING,
by JOHN F. FANSELOW, Longman, 1987

I was lucky to first meet the breaking rules ideas in the form of an inspired lecture given by John Fanselow at one of the European Tesol conferences. He happens to be an excellent, flamboyant plenary speaker and the hall hummed with excitement. Many of us agreed that teaching is a routinising job and that most of us slump into ruts we are sometimes not even aware of.

The ways he sugggested we break rules were simple:

- If you normally ask students to underline words they don't know, reverse the procedure and ask them to blank out such words and ignore them. Notice your normal practice and do the opposite.

- Notice the difference between the way people do an activity in a classroom and outside in ordinary life. In classrooms people sit at desks to read - there is silence. At home people sometimes lounge on cushions and listen to music while reading. Have reading happen this way in class.

- Take a traditional practice like reading aloud in class and change some detail about the way it is done. Ask the student to read silently, to look up from the page and then to say what she has read to somebody in the room. The change in the detail radically changes the whole.

Fanselow's message in that lecture was "For God's sake do something different next Monday morning". Instinctively many of us knew that this was brilliant advice.

The book under review carries the same message but sadly it is a hard read if you work through it the way he suggests you do. He sets out to provide the reader with a system for analysing classroom and other communication. Part of his sytem is a framework for identifying the rules that govern a particular classroom situation. The table below gives you a brief and unfair glimpse of what he is proposing:

TABLE 2–4
Five Characteristics of Communications[1]

What Is Being Done?		*How Is It Being Done?*		
SOURCE/TARGET	MOVE TYPE	MEDIUM	USE	CONTENT
teacher/•	structure	linguistic	attend ——— characterize	life
student (sgc)[2]/•	solicit respond react	nonlinguistic paralinguistic	present relate reproduce	procedure
other/•	since	since	——— set	study

[1] The target in each case, indicated by a bullet, can be any one of the sources.
[2] s = individual student; g = group of students; c = class.

The quote is unfair because this table summarises 20 pages of fairly dense explanation.

My problem as a reader of the book is that I do not feel motivated to learn the language of the communication description he is proposing. This is not just because of its length and complexity but because these things are good, clear and simple in themselves. They do not really need all the conceptual framework that Fanselow has found helpful for himself. Fanselow is capable not only of being an inspiring lecturer but can also translate concepts dressed up in the jargon of his system into clear language. In the chapter on feedback and mistakes, the author presents six major ways a teacher can respond to learner error. Here are the six ways in "Fanselowese" and "clear".

Fanselowese
you can attend (see table above)
you can relate
you can characterise
you can reproduce
you can characterise-evaluate
you can set or reproduce

Clear
You listen, you say nothing, you give the student time to think
you give the student the grammar etc. rule
you comment on the error, maybe making a comparison
you imitate the error
you praise or blame the student
you model the correct utterance

I suspect I will not be the only reader unmotivated to learn the Fanselowese. Can I get juice from Breaking Rules while sidestepping its intellectual framework?

The book is 450 pages long and packed with exciting ways of questioning what you do with your students. It is therefore well worth getting hold of and hopping about in. Let me share two practical ideas I could immediately use:

The class dictionary: when new words are met, the students pop them on cards with a definition, a mother tongue translation, a contextualising sentence, a feeling-about-the-word sentence etc. The cards are filed in a class box and are available for later consultation. Simple, do-able, useable tomorrow. A computerised version of this idea is now being tested in Danish schools.

Substituting observation for testing
In the author's own words: "During the five to twenty minutes needed to develop one multiple choice item - without pre-testing it - five to twenty student communications can be written on note cards. If the communications are made during a break by students to each other, or are made as students are actually engaged in the solution of a real problem, such as putting together a jigsaw puzzle, or in a conversation of their own, the communication is likely to be more similar to those they ordinarily make than responses to questions in tests. They may be less inhibited as well, and as a result a more valid picture of capability may result."

My regret is that the thinking in this book has had to be presented via the jargon of a system that has clearly been inspirational for the author but which is too much of a mouthful for any but the most passionate reader to digest in the few hours one normally gives to this type of reading. It annoys me to have to read with my head bent forward battling in the teeth of a jargonistic wind. Oh, that this book were as joyful a read as the first part of Stevick's Images and Options: the two books in their messages are cousins if not sisters. It is right that the last words of a review should be the author's:

"Both during and after the reading of a novel, a newspaper, or a textbook, often all that is required is memory work or thinking. Both during and after the reading of Breaking Rules, I ask you for much more than memory and thinking. Generating and exploring alternatives requires activity-writing comments, transcribing and recording communications -and also action - substituting alternatives in communications you control..... This book is ready to be your companion for life."

Mario Rinvolucri

Pilgrims, Canterbury.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of particular relevance or interest to teacher trainers are:

- Making School-Centred INSET Work - A guide for group leaders by P. Easen and E. Dawtrey. The Open University and Croom Helm 1985. (ISBN 0-7099-0959-4) This 98 page booklet provides a possible framework for 8 group meetings of teachers from different schools who are attempting to develop their own support network and confidence. It is a companion volume to a video and teachers pack of the same title.

- Consolidated report on the programme of international workshops for trainers of teachers of modern languages 1984-1987 by J. Trim. Council of Europe 1988. Available from the Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe, BP 431 R6, F-67006 Strasbourg Cedex. 37 workshops were held in 15 different countries with 1500 participants. There were 230 animators from 15 countries. 75% of respondents to questionnaires sent out after workshops stated that they had been able to disseminate information as a result of the workshops. These workshops probably represent the largest, most intensive project of international co-operation in teacher training so far undertaken.

- A Guide to Student-Centred Learning by D Brandes and P. Ginnis.Blackwell, 1986. ISBN 0-631-149333. Inspired by Carl Rogers, this book discusses the theory and principles of student-centred learning, presents the reactions of teachers and students who have been involved with it and offers 100 recipes for student-centred activities. Written for teachers of any subject.

- Childrens Ideas in Science edited by R. Driver, E. Guesne and A. Tiberghien. Open University Press 1985. (ISBN 0-335-15040-3). This book concerns secondary school children's ideas about natural phenomena and how these ideas change and develop with teaching. It gives an insight into the conceptual world of children in classrooms.

- The Red Book of Groups and how to lead them better by Gail Houston (1984) ISBN-09510323-1-3 or direct from the author at 8 Rochester Terrace, London NW1 9JN, U.K. Little red readable paperback for anyone finding themselves running some kind of small informal group and wanting to do it better. Interesting discussions and activities on starting groups, leadership, rules, feedback, noticing and listening etc. Apt cartoons. Amusing, no nonsense style.

- Dictation: New methods,new possibilities by P. Davis and M. Rinvolucri (1988) C.U.P. (ISBN 0-521-34299-6). The traditional "known" technique of dictation is loosened in this book into scores of variations for use in communicative, large, mixed ability, active classes with native and native speaking teachers. This book provides the methodology and the tactical variation to make lively sense out of a hitherto popular but "old-fashioned" teaching activity.

- Grammar Practice Activities: a practical guide for teachers by Penny Ur (1988) C.U.P. (ISBN 0-521-33847-6). This book is for teachers who give grammar input to their students and feel comfortable using a broadly communicative methodology. Part One gives guidelines on the place of grammar in language teaching, its organisation and learning as well as principles underlying teaching in heterogeneous classes, factors contributing to successful grammar practice. Part Two gives 200 game-like activities that can be looked up under e.g. Past Simple (11 ideas), Interrogatives (11 ideas), plus photocopyable texts and visuals. Solid. Good value.

- Language and Gender: Making the Difference by Cate Poynton (O.U.P.) 1985/2nd edition '89 ISBN 0-19-437160-3. If you've ever heard yourself saying 'No, not really' in answer to the student question 'Is there a difference between women's and men's language in English?', then this book is for you! Starting at word level Poynton moves on to grammar, phonology, register, genre, field and beyond to establish that language is used to actively create difference and inequality between the sexes. Excellent, readable review of relevant literature as well as a fascinatingly oblique way into Hallidayan Linguistics.

- Explorations in Teacher Training: Problems and Issues Edited by Tony Duff (1988) Longman (ISBN 0-582-03719-0). A collection of essays to celebrate 25 years of teacher training by International House. It includes articles on the 4 week preparatory course, the short, intensive courses for experienced non-native teachers, the Distance Training Programme, How language awareness, phonology and reading have been dealt with on training courses and the selection and training of teacher trainers. Excellent brief abstracts before each article.

- Making it happen by Patricia Richard-Amato (1988) Longman. (ISBN 0-8013-0027-4) A large thick paperback exploring the theory and practice of a language teaching that places more emphasis on meaningful interaction than on language analysis. Part I deals with theory from grammar to communicative approaches. Part II explores methods such as Total Physical Response and activities such as jazzchants and storytelling. Part III gets into the nitty gritty of lesson planning, teaching skills, teaching through content. Part IV reports on ESL and EFL programmes in action in the U.S.A. Part V prints related readings by e.g. Chomsky, Widdowson, Oller. A light touch in weaving relevant theory and interesting practice together. User friendly. A window onto American EFL/ESL.

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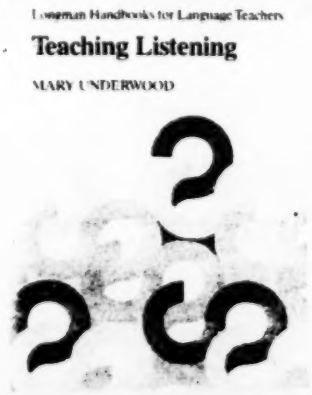

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